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No date for refugee talks — Israel

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — An Israeli spokesman said Friday no date has been set for talks on the fate of the Palestinian refugees displaced by the 1967 Middle East war. Palestinian chief negotiator Nabil Shaath announced in Cairo that a committee would meet in June to study the question of the refugees he estimates number 1,485,000 with all their dependents today. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) wants a staggered right of return for the refugees. "Israel is committed to discuss the question in accordance with the Declaration of Principles," Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's spokesman Gad Ben-Ari told AFP. "When, how, how many, all these questions are premature. Only when a framework is set will we then make more specific comments." Dr. Shaath's statement stirred anger among Israeli right-wingers. The leading opposition party, the Likud, warned of "a demographic disaster" and accused the government of going against "Jewish and Zionist values." "By agreeing 'to talk about a Palestinian right of return, Mr. Rabin has proved he has lost control of the peace negotiations," said the National Religious Party in a statement.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جوردان تلغز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية الراية

Clinton sued for 'sexual harassment'

LITTLE ROCK (AP) — A former Arkansas state employee on Friday sued President Clinton in U.S. district court, alleging as governor he violated her civil rights by making an unwanted sexual advance in 1991. "It is a tabloid trash with a legal caption on it," Mr. Clinton's attorney, Robert Bennett, said in Washington Friday. The lawsuit by Paula Corbin Jones sought \$700,000 in damages from Mr. Clinton for "willful, outrageous and malicious conduct" during the alleged incident at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock. The suit accused Mr. Clinton of "sexually harassing and assaulting" Ms. Jones. The White House has denied an encounter with Ms. Jones took place but took the threat of litigation seriously enough to hire Mr. Bennett, a prominent Washington attorney. The lawsuit came as one of Ms. Jones' sisters, in a television interview, questioned her motivation. The woman identified as Jones' older sister, Charlotte Brown, said Ms. Jones had told her about an encounter with Mr. Clinton on May 8, 1991, and that she said at the time that it "smelled money." A second sister told the Washington Post that she thought Ms. Brown was lying.

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Yemenis fight civil war, report air and Scud attacks

Arab League schedules emergency talks

Combined agency dispatches

REPORTS from Yemen indicated on Friday a full-blown civil war was underway between the country's north-ern and south-ern, with the two sides claiming air raids, Scud missile attacks and pitched battles in and around Sanaa and Aden.

All communications with the country remained down on Friday, the second full day after a one-year-long political feud between northern and southern leaders burst out into clashes.

The Arab League, the United Nations and the United States urged restraint on both sides. The Cairo-based league also scheduled emergency talks Saturday on the situation in Yemen and an Egyptian call for the dispatch of an Arab peacekeeping force to the Red Sea country was expected to be debated by the pan-Arab body.

Reports of fighting from the two sides could not be independently confirmed.

Hundreds of foreigners fled the spiralling civil war.

Around 400 mainly European evacuees were transferred to the French warship Jules Verne moored off Aden and were to be taken to safety in Djibouti.

As Yemen's four-year-old union rapidly disintegrated, President Ali Abdullah Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) said his troops were bearing down on Aden with the aim of capturing it and putting an end to the south-erners' attempts at "secession."

Diplomats said a large concentration of northern troops had been seen 50 kilometres north of Aden on Friday.

They were aiming to join up with other divisions stationed around Aden and then make their push for the city, said the diplomats.

The forces of Mr. Saleh, a northerner, are locked in a bitter struggle with those of Vice-President Ali Salem Al-Beidh, a southerner, who was dismissed by parliament on Thursday night in a further deepening of the crisis.

Southern officials said their planes had hit the presidential palace in Sanaa with missiles and set it ablaze, but there was no immediate confirmation of the report.

Their anti-aircraft gunners also shot down a northern warplane which attacked the airport here Friday as the evacuation was still underway in the port only a few kilometres away.

Aden airport had already been badly damaged in a raid on Thursday which caused several deaths, while three attacking planes were reportedly shot down.

Diplomats in the Gulf said the Jules Verne had picked up more than 400 evacuees, including 60 from France, 170 Canadians and Britons, 120 Russians, and 90 Swiss and Germans.

In Paris, the defence ministry said the first stage of the evacuation was over but another ship was heading to

Yemen to pick up more foreigners.

With communications difficult there was no clear picture Friday of the fighting, which erupted through large areas of the country on Thursday.

A North Yemeni statement said loyal troops were advancing towards Aden and would not stop until they had control of the city.

The London-based Middle East Broadcasting Corporation quoted an official statement from the northern-based government as saying loyal forces were advancing from four sides.

They would keep pushing until "the situation in Aden is under control," the statement said.

Shortly after the report, Aden radio said southern and northern troops were locked in fierce battles in the streets of Sanaa.

The official SABA news agency said Southern forces fired five Scud missiles at Sanaa.

The SABA report quoting a North Yemeni source said the Scud did not cause any material damage or casualties. He said they were fired from bases in Aden towards the capital.

Two missiles exploded in mountainous areas near the capital, one exploded near the airport while two landed without exploding.

Aden radio also reported that several buildings in Sanaa, including the presidential palace, were on fire while fierce battles were underway in several Yemeni provinces.

With all communications with Yemen cut since fighting between rival troops erupted on Wednesday night it was impossible to confirm the radio report.

Officials from Beidh's Yemen Socialist Party said their forces had driven back several offensives by the northerners in various parts of the country.

The Arab League decided to hold an emergency meeting to discuss an Egyptian proposal to send an Arab intervention force to help end the fighting.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali appealed to Yemen's leaders to "exercise maximum restraint" and welcomed mediation efforts from countries in the region.

He urged "all concerned in Yemen to deepen their resolve to find a solution to the conflict through peaceful means in accordance with the U.N. charter," he said.

The United States advised its 5,000 nationals to leave Yemen as officials tried desperately to evacuate Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau, who came to Yemen on Wednesday in a bid to reconcile the leaders.

The Yemeni forces fought land battles in several areas along the former border between north and south on Thursday.

Both sides had said they were repulsing attacks and claimed the capture of large numbers of troops.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters that

Jordan and Egypt map out close political, economic cooperation

Joint committee ends two days of deliberations

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Egypt on Friday welcomed efforts by the Arab League to achieve Arab reconciliation.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali said a piecemeal approach to solve inter-Arab differences is needed at this stage and called for focus on bilateral relations and cooperation as a prelude to restoring inter-Arab relations to normalcy.

Speaking at a joint press conference with Egypt's Premier Atef Sedki, Dr. Majali said there was a need to search for points of agreement among Arab countries and to shelve differences for a grace period after which causes of difference can be discussed.

Supporting Dr. Majali's perception, Dr. Sedki said Arabs should start from points of agreement and then move to other steps. However, he said, reflections of the Gulf crisis will continue for some time until the wound heals.

Addressing journalists following the signing of the minutes of two days of meetings of the Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee, Dr. Sedki and Dr. Majali said the meeting contributed to enhancing bilateral relations in all fields.



His Majesty King Hussein on Thursday receives Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Sedki in a meeting attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

His Majesty King Hussein on Thursday receives Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Sedki in a meeting attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Dr. Sedki said Jordanian-Egyptian relations are unique and added that the aspiration, goals, hopes and strategies of both nations are the same. He added that contacts between Jordan and Egypt have not stopped even when the committee's meetings were suspended.

Dr. Sedki, paid tribute to His Majesty King Hussein's Pan-Arab stands towards

Egypt and his untiring efforts to settle inter-Arab differences and achieve Arab solidarity. Referring to the audience they had with King Hussein Thursday, Dr. Sedki said King Hussein briefed them on the Arab situations, particularly the latest events in Yemen, and on efforts to reconcile the Yemeni parties.

Dr. Sedki said views of Egypt and Jordan on the

Yemeni crisis were very close and even identical. However, he added, "We did not discuss the formation of a joint Jordanian-Egyptian mediation team."

Dr. Sedki described the situation in Yemen as complex and stressed the need for a common Arab intervention to save Yemen from an all-out

(Continued on page 10)

Victorious ANC names cabinet

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) on Friday declared South Africa's first multiracial election free and fair, and said the African National Congress (ANC) won with 62.65 per cent of the vote.

The announcement concluded the historic election that ended the racial oppression of apartheid and closed the colonial period in Africa.

Now, ANC leader Nelson Mandela will become South Africa's first black president and begin trying to repair the country's deep racial divisions and economic disparities.

The ANC fell short of the key target of a two-thirds parliamentary majority, which would have allowed it to dictate the country's final constitution.

Mr. Mandela said he was relieved the ANC did not get the two-thirds majority because "already tensions were building up that we were now going to write our own constitution."

"We want to make the government of national unity something different from a hollow shell," said Mr. Mandela. "Every political party must feel that they are exercising power..."

Outgoing President F.W. de Klerk, meeting with Mr. Mandela to map the transition, wished him "the very best in regard to the tremendous responsibilities that fall on his shoulders."

Announcing the final vote count to political winners and losers, diplomats and journalists, the election chairman, Judge Johann Kriegler, said the commission concluded the election was "substantially free and fair."

"This we are able to do despite the large number of objections and complaints from various political parties," Mr. Kriegler said.

Mr. De Klerk's white-led National Party finished second with 20.39 per cent of the vote. Third went to the ANC's main black rival, the Zulu national-

ist Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) with 10.54 per cent.

The ANC will have 252 seats in the new 400-member parliament. The National Party will have 82, and Inkatha 43.

Finishing fourth in the overall vote with 2.17 per cent and six seats in parliament was the pro-apartheid Freedom Front, which advocates a white homeland. Fifth was the white Liberal Democratic Party, with 1.7 per cent of the vote and seven seats. Sixth went to the militant black Pan Africanist Congress with 1.25 per cent of the vote and five seats.

Seventh was the African Christian Democratic Party with 0.4 per cent of the votes and two seats.

Mr. Mandela will be elected president during the new parliament's first meeting Monday and will assume power Tuesday at his inauguration. He faces turning his liberation movement into a government and fulfilling promises to bring housing, literacy and opportunities to the black majority that has largely lived in squalor while the white minority enjoyed first world comforts.

Hours before the IEC announced the final official results, the ANC was releasing the names of its 17 government members to serve under Mr. Mandela.

The first deputy will be Thabo Mbeki, the ANC's suave and eloquent national chairman; the second will be outgoing President de Klerk.

His aides were packing up Friday to move their belongings to offices in another wing of the administrative Union Buildings in Pretoria.

The ANC list of cabinet members ended months of speculation over which of two men would play crown prince to South Africa's first democratically elected president; the 58-year-old Mbeki, or the equally eloquent Cyril Ramaphosa, ANC secretary-general and one of the architects of the country's negotiated road to democracy.

(Continued on page 2)



His Majesty King Hussein on Thursday receives Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat who paid a brief visit to Jordan to pay condolences to the King over the death of the Queen Mother and to brief him on the autonomy agreement he signed with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Cairo

Palestinians sceptical about autonomy

JERICHO, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Two days after Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin signed a deal in Cairo initiating Palestinian self-rule, life was little changed in this town near the Jordan River.

An Israeli army jeep circled Jericho's main square. A Palestinian youth quaffed the remains of a soft drink and heaved the empty bottle at the soldiers. It landed near the jeep's rear tyre. The soldiers continued on their way.

"The occupation is the same. The army is the same. The only thing that has changed is the wrapping," said a shopowner selling Palestinian flags near the square.

Underlining the sense of anti-climax, moves planned under the Cairo deal, which gives Palestinians limited autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho enclave of the West Bank, have been of lesser scope than expected.

The army said the release of thousands of Palestinian prisoners would halt on Friday, apparently to resume after the weekend.

Israel has agreed to free about 5,000 prisoners within three weeks of signing Wednesday's deal, half within

days.

The army said it would not have exact numbers of those freed until the release was completed, but a military source said just over 1,000 prisoners had so far returned to their homes in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

The general in charge of Israel's 27-year-long occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip said on Friday he could not predict when the PLO would take full charge of the self-rule areas.

Asked by army radio about Mr. Rabin's statement that Mr. Arafat had requested a delay of up to three weeks of Israel's withdrawal from the areas, Major General Danny Rothchild said:

"The sooner we enter an overlap period and they take upon themselves these tasks — the better. How long it will take, I have no idea, we will try to do it as quickly as possible."

One thousand Palestinian police were to enter the area within 24 hours of the Cairo signing. So far only a small advance team of senior officers has come. The PLO said the first police contingents would not arrive until next week.

On Thursday in Cairo, Marwan Kanafani, adviser to Mr.

(Continued on page 10)

Jordan calls on Japan to assume high-profile Mideast political role

Kakizawa leaves after signing \$125m loans

By P. V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan urged Japan to increase its political profile in the Middle East and use its influence to advance the Arab-Israeli peace process during talks with Japanese Foreign Minister Koji Kakizawa, who ended a two-day visit to the Kingdom on Friday, officials said.

Mr. Kakizawa, who arrived here from the West Bank Thursday and left for Syria Friday, was received by His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Salam Majali and other officials.

At a meeting with Dr. Majali Thursday evening, Mr. Kakizawa signed an exchange of notes under which the Japanese government will extend \$125 million in soft loans to Jordan — \$80 million to help Jordan improve its balance of payments situation and develop the Kingdom's energy sector and \$45 million to finance the expansion of the Aqaba Thermal Power Station.

The \$80 million loan matches a similar loan granted to

Jordan by the World Bank for the same purpose.

In addition, Mr. Kakizawa and Planning Minister Ziad Fariz also signed an agreement under which Japan will extend \$4 million as grant to help a Jordanian programme to expand food production.

The grant came after the per capita income of Jordan dipped below the "threshold that determines" eligibility for Japanese aid, an official spokesman said, noting that until now the Kingdom did not qualify for outright assistance since its per capita income remained above the parameters set by the Tokyo government.

Before heading for Syria on Friday, Mr. Kakizawa visited the Baqaa refugee camp outside Amman and attended a groundbreaking ceremony for a girls school which will be built in the camp with a Japanese contribution of \$780,000. He also inspected the site for "a mother's bakery" initiated by the Young Men's Christian Association of Jordan and financed by a \$22,000 contribution from Japan.

The minister also visited a charitable clinic in Baqaa which will receive Japanese

equipment worth \$49,000.

"The visit of Mr. Kakizawa to Jordan aims at promoting the Middle East peace process and seeking the ways of making more commitment to the negotiations, which Japan has already been deeply involved in, especially the multilateral phase, as well as enhancing the bilateral relationship with Jordan," a Japanese embassy press release said.

"Within this context, the government of Japan attaches great importance to the improvement of the living standard of Palestinian refugees outside the occupied territories since Japan thinks that attention should equally be paid to these refugees who long await the tangible benefits resulting from the development of the peace process like those in the occupied territories," it said.

Seiji Morimoto, director of the international press division of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, told a briefing Thursday evening that Mr. Kakizawa, who is visiting the Middle East on his first foreign trip after taking office only last week, was highly satisfied with his visit.

"We believe that Middle East peacemaking has been

ushered into a new era," Mr. Morimoto said, referring to the signing of the autonomy accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Cairo on Wednesday witnessed by Mr. Kakizawa.

It was the gist of Mr. Kakizawa's talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in Cairo, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in occupied Jerusalem, and Palestinian leaders at the Orient House in the Holy City.

On his way to Jordan, he also visited a Jericho hospital.

In view of the progress in the Israeli-Palestinian track of negotiations, Japan believes that "it is time we focused on the multilateral" phase of the peace process, Mr. Morimoto said. "Japan sees the bilaterals and multilaterals as the wheels of the same cart. If one doesn't move, the cart doesn't move."

During talks with Mr. Kakizawa, Jordanian leaders urged Japan to "get involved in a political dialogue in the Middle East," Mr. Morimoto said, adding that Japan indeed sought to increase its political profile in the region.

(Continued on page 10)

U.N. permits more Serb tanks to move

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The United Nations said on Friday it was continuing to allow Bosnian Serb tanks through a designated weapons exclusion zone around Sarajevo despite having announced earlier the deal was cancelled.

Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic told Reuters he was "deeply disappointed, almost shocked" by the news that the tanks would continue to be allowed through the zone.

U.N. military spokesman Eric Chaperon said the last two of a total of seven tanks would move through the zone between 1200 and 1300 GMT on Friday with the permission of the U.N. Bosnia commander, Lieutenant-General Michael Rose.

The hitherto secret deal to allow the tanks to move, which has drawn a storm of protest from the Muslim-led Bosnian

government in Sarajevo, was negotiated by U.N. special envoy Yasushi Akashi when he met Serb leaders on Tuesday.

In return, the Serbs agreed to the deployment of U.N. observers in Brcko, northern Bosnia, and allowed 170 British troops they were blocking to proceed to Gorazde.

Most of the tanks apparently are from the Serb stronghold of Pale east of Sarajevo. They were headed for Trnovo south of the Bosnian capital, and the only route they could use was through the "exclusion zone."

It was unclear why Serbs wanted to move the tanks.

At his U.N. headquarters in Zagreb, Croatia, Mr. Akashi on Thursday defended his decision, saying the Serb tanks "were to adopt a posture which is non-threatening so far as their capability to attack Sarajevo."

The tank deal involved Serb agreement to free 160 British

peacekeepers held since Sunday by Serb soldiers outside the Muslim enclave of Gorazde, where the Britons were supposed to join 500 peacekeepers monitoring a shaky truce.

The British troops were allowed into Gorazde, a U.N. "safe area" southeast of Sarajevo, on Thursday.

Mr. Akashi said the Serbs also agreed to allow U.N. military observers to deploy in the area of Brcko, a potential Muslim-Serb flashpoint.

Bosnia's collective presidency said it was "shocked by the information," and demanded Mr. Akashi's resignation. The Muslim-led government accused Mr. Akashi of "practically taking part in the aggression on Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Bosnian Vice-President Ejup Ganic said the Serbs cannot get a better friend than Mr. Akashi.

He added: "It's a complete

destruction of United Nations resolutions by local U.N. officials here, so they have to get their act together."

Two Serb tanks moved through the Sarajevo 20 kilometres "exclusion zone" on Wednesday and three more went through on Thursday.

This was despite an announcement in Zagreb on Thursday by U.N. spokesman Matthew Nerzig that the tank deal was off.

The controversy threatened the ceasefire that has kept Sarajevo largely quiet since mid-February, when the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) threatened to bomb the Bosnian Serbs if they did not remove all weapons from the 20-kilometre "exclusion zone" around Sarajevo or place them under U.N. control.

There have been increasing reports of weapons within the zone.

Mideast arms talks end with little fanfare

DOHA (Agencies) — Israelis, Arabs and a support cast of nations from around the world ended three days of talks on Middle East arms control on Thursday without real progress, but both host and sponsor said they were not disappointed.

"How many years does it take for a dream to come true?" asked Qatar Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassem Al Thani.

Robert Einhorn, the representative of the United States which co-sponsors the arms control negotiations with Russia, spoke of an important human dimension.

"There was a much better understanding... greater comfort in talking to each other," he said of the delegations from Israel and 14 Arab states at the fifth round of the arms control panel. It is one of five sets of multilateral negotiations launched after the 1991 Madrid Middle East peace conference.

The sponsors had hoped this round would agree a long sought-after declaration of principles that would set the agenda for future negotiations on Middle East arms control and regional security.

But delegations at the conference failed to approve the declaration on Wednesday and it has been referred to a further meeting, at a place and time yet to be agreed.

Arab delegations led by Saudi Arabia objected to political clauses that implied an end of the state of war with Israel. They saw them as pre-empting the results of bilateral negotiations between Israel and immediate neighbours Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and the Palestinians.

The chief Saudi delegate, Prince Turki Ben Mohammed, said the multilateral talks were launched in Madrid to complement the direct negotiations and should not move ahead of them.

"This meeting does not mean normalisation (of relations with Israel)," said Sheikh Hamad, the conference host. He confirmed delegates' reports of differences among the Arab delegations on this issue but said that they eventually agreed with the majority that the brief of the arms control panel was technical rather than political.

Prince Turki told the closing session the panel should concentrate its efforts on issues such as armaments and arms industries.

"We categorically reject the political section of the project, which is aimed at normalising relations between Arab states and Israel," Prince Turki told AFP.

Most Arab participants also rejected this part of the text," Prince Turki said. David Ivry, leader of the Israeli negotiating team, stressed his government's commitment to the entire plan, including the political chapter.

"The political section (of the accord) is necessary because it offers a working framework for future meetings," he argued. The draft statement drawn up at a meeting in Cairo in January proposed a number of confidence-building measures and the creation of a zone where weapons of mass destruction would be banned.

Prince Turki said the statement should cover "only military questions, including the elimination of weapons of mass destruction."

Mr. Ivry said he did not understand Saudi Arabia's objections. The kingdom had rejected a U.S. proposal to hold another meeting in June in Vienna, judging that date too close," he added.

Prince Turki told reporters earlier his country adamantly opposed the adoption of political principles primarily aimed at pushing Arabs into ties with Israel even before it was peace with countries like Syria and Lebanon.

The two countries have so far boycotted the multilateral negotiations.

Western delegates said a clause on political and other fundamental rights was unacceptable to Saudi Arabia and other conservative Arabs who do not accept the Western understanding of those concepts.

They see such a clause as a virtual invitation to others to intervene in their internal affairs.

Arab delegations focussed on Israel's nuclear arms programme and Sheikh Hamad said it should be a major concern of the arms control negotiations.

Israel, which enjoys a technical edge over the Arabs, focussed on Arab numerical superiority in conventional weapons.

Mr. Einhorn said one tangible confidence-building measure agreed in principle was a Netherlands-proposed electronic communications network to link the foreign ministries of the Middle East.

But joining was voluntary and the Dutch promoters of the scheme were seen on Thursday trying hard to persuade the different delegations to agree to be linked to the network based initially on a hub in the Hague.

Switzerland and Finland offered to welcome delegates from the region for visits to arms control sites and military training in the two countries.

Israel also offered a similar visit to one of its military sites, but the suggestion was turned down by Saudi Arabia.

"We will not take part in any activities in Israel and we will not host any of the multilateral negotiations," declared Prince Turki.

Christopher cites progress on goals of Mideast trip

SHANNON, Ireland (USA) — Secretary of State Warren Christopher believes "good progress" was achieved on each of the principal objectives of his just-completed trip to the Middle East.

Speaking with reporters aboard his plane May 4 en route from Cairo to Shannon, the secretary said he was reassured that Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states remain firmly opposed to lifting United Nations sanctions against Iraq. They continue to see both Iraq and Iran as threats to stability in the region, he said.

Mr. Christopher said his trip had served as "a catalyst" to culminate negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians on an agreement to implement their Declaration of Principles. That agreement was signed May 4 in Cairo. The secretary said the United States had helped define the issues and influenced the parties to agree to a deadline for completion of the agreement.

While Syria and Israel remain far from agreement on a peace accord, Mr. Christopher said, for the first time they have presented comprehensive approaches to each other. "That provides opportunities for the future," he said, adding, "I don't want to be at all over-optimistic about the pace at which this will go."

He will return to the region later this month in an effort to advance the Syrian-Israeli negotiations.

During his trip, Mr. Christopher also continued to press for a cessation of hostilities and ultimately a peace settlement in Bosnia. He described his May 4 meeting in Cairo with Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev as "positive" in that regard.

Following is the transcript of Christopher's briefing, as released by the State Department in Washington:

Secretary Christopher: I enter this conversation with my usual caution about trip euphoria, which is a disease of feeling that travel is somehow in and of itself an accomplishment. But we have made good progress on each of the principal goals that I had for this trip.

First, I hoped to invigorate the coalition with respect to both Iraq and in a lesser sense, Iran. I am concerned that the sanctions regime is under attack on Iraq and this seemed to be a good time to indicate the strong view of the United States that this is not the time to lift the sanctions.

I was really reassured by the reactions in Saudi Arabia and the GCC on Iraq. They still see Iraq as a very considerable danger in that area and I don't see any encouragement for the lifting of sanctions coming out of that group as a whole. I had a chance to raise the same point in Egypt and found comparable support for maintaining the coalition. I think the region is very much stunned by the effort of the Iraqis, or not the effort, but the assassination operation by Iraqis in Lebanon, which is a reminder about that regime which came at a time when there had been some pressures to ease the sanctions.

I was struck by the consistent reaction that came from those who I would talk about — pressure for the easing of sanctions coming from some quarters — to immediately identify that as a commercial interest, pure and simple.

I also found that our policy on Iraq and the dual containment policy is very much appreciated and well-received in the region. The GCC countries — Saudi Arabia and

Egypt as well — regard Iran as a very considerable threat to the stability of the region. I guess I would say that sort of the stability of the region is the overall single-word cap on this first point that I am making. You could get a debate among the countries of the region as to whether Iran or Iraq is the more serious threat. I basically saw no purpose in trying to make a hierarchy there, but we are concerned about both countries, so the first purpose was served quite well, on this trip and I am quite glad that that was identified as one of the principal purposes.

The second purpose was to try to bring to a head the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. This has been going on for a long time with indications that they were making progress, but they saw, I think many people saw, a race against time here with the extremists taking advantage of the lack of progress on the ground to challenge the peace process and challenge those who are involved in it.

I think that my trip served as a catalyst to bring the matter to a head. With leadership and cooperation with President Mubarak, we were able to set a deadline for the conclusion of the negotiations. I don't think it is too much to say that without a deadline, the negotiations would have gone on for a long time. As one of the principal leaders said to me, agreement could have been reached in three days or three months. I think there is a good deal of merit in that point of view. We were able to establish a deadline.

I think we helped in defining the issues. In the first meeting that we had with Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat, I served at least the temporal purpose of focusing the parties on the principal issues, which turned out in the end game to be the main issues, although it is certainly fair to say that it was such a long night because people continued to raise new issues; issues which were not central, but nevertheless were of great importance.

I could illustrate that perhaps, by saying that when I met with the inside Palestinians, that is, the Palestinians who live in the region, they expressed a number of concerns, including particularly those about Jerusalem. We had a lot of discussion last night about the restrictions on travel to Jerusalem, especially of doctors and nurses and other professionals.

We think that it is a reflection of the importance of their confining to solution. The principal credit for reaching the result that you see today is certainly due to the parties and I think the leadership of Mubarak and Mousa should not be underestimated. If our presence there — my particular presence and the assistance we had in bringing it to conclusion — was useful, I will be very happy for that. But I think that the principal credit ought to go to the parties themselves.

It is certainly common ground now that there is a huge job of implementation. As Prime Minister Rabin said to me, you can see some of the difficulty in the system, that will make implementation a very complex task.

The third purpose of my trip, of course, was to try to stimulate progress in the Syrian-Israeli track. I feel that the trip accomplished its purpose, causing the parties to engage on a range of issues. For the first time, they had each presented a comprehensive approach. As I said, the architecture is not identical,

but very similar and I think that provides opportunities for the future.

But at the same time, I don't want to be at all over-optimistic about the pace at which this will go. The distance between the parties is such that a lot of work will be required. I expect to be coming back to the region at the request of the parties in the relatively near future. But I assume some of you will be on those trips. I urge you to take into account my comment that it is a long road and we will have to proceed sequentially. But I think the parties are seriously engaged now in a way that makes me feel that this track is not in the stalemate condition that it was before.

The fourth and quite different aspect of the trip was to try to maintain the momentum on the momentum on the initiative that was launched at the president's direction and my insistence on Bosnia. My meetings with Hurd and Juppe and Kozyrev were functional in that regard.

My meeting again today with Kozyrev, I think, was positive on that. I stayed in frequent touch with Redman throughout the trip. The Contact Group, as you know, is meeting today and tomorrow with the Bosnian Serbs. They are looking for a date which the foreign ministers, relating to the Contact Group, will be getting together to try to press for a cessation of hostilities and ultimately, a settlement agreement. We will be releasing a statement on this subject, a few paragraphs.

But I think that is all. I am going to stay and take a few questions. I will ask a senior administration official to give you some of the flavour from last night and today as we got into the end game, some of which you saw quite graphically.

Question: Mr. Secretary, could you please tell us what was going through your mind as things started to crumble off stage and give us a sense of some of the conversation that was taking place on the stage?

Answer: Another official may have more to say about that than I. This was not an unfamiliar pattern to me as Chairman Arafat has such a difficult and complex role, found it difficult to come to a final decision in the matter. I was concerned that we find a way to reassure him that the issues that we had agreed on last night would indeed receive continuing consideration and that by his signing the map did not rule out continuing consideration of those issues.

The communication was not ideal on stage and what went through my mind was to find some way to have a conversation that would make that clear to the Chairman and to get back on the track which I think he and Prime Minister Rabin very much wanted to be on. When we got a chance to meet briefly off stage, we were able to resolve the matter rather quickly. But, as I say, I think you saw some of the fragilities in the system.

I think that the patience of Prime Minister Rabin and the leadership of President Mubarak with some help from me, was able to bring the situation back into focus. After the session, I would say the relationships between the parties were as good as they were last night at about 2:30 when we finally agreed. I feel the matter is back on track.

I don't think it particularly prudent for me to try to spell out the various conversations that were going on on the stage.

UNICEF approves \$140m programmes

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has approved an expenditure programme worth a total of \$140 million for Palestinians and five other countries in the Middle East and North Africa covering the next five years, a UNICEF official said Friday.

Niger Fisher, deputy director-general of the UNICEF regional office for the Middle East and North Africa, said the approval came during a meeting of the executive board of the UNICEF in New York last week.

The funding covers projects to benefit Palestinian women and children in Lebanon, Syria and the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as Egypt, Djibouti, Sudan and Tunisia in addition to short-duration programmes in Iraq, a UNICEF press release said.

The approval for spending for the Palestinians was made "with many members recommending the decision as opportune in view of the political developments in the region and the consolidated chances of a comprehensive and lasting peace being established in the near future," the press release said.

In general, the U.N. has increased its allocations for the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip by 55 per cent to \$388 million during 1994 as immediate support for Palestinian autonomy.

The world body envisages allocations of \$250 million to support ongoing welfare and services projects for the West Bank and an additional \$138 million for infrastructure development and expanded services.

"Supporting the peace process will require a rapid improvement of the health and education services provided to Palestinians as well as a major initiative to create employment to raise the average level of family incomes," said a U.N. document released in December.

The allocations mean increased services of the three main U.N. organisations present in the occupied territories — the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP), UNICEF and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) — under a coordinator appointed by the U.N. General Secretariat.

UNICEF projects cover community-level structures, with particular focus on "disadvantaged groups in areas such primary health care, basic

education, physiotherapy and psychological trauma."

The UNICEF press release, issued Thursday, quoted Sarajini Vittachi, regional director for the Middle East and North Africa, who attended the board meeting, as saying: "The prospect of peace offered a unique opportunity for regional development and renewed commitment to put children first."

"Positive factors in the region included its hegemony, good communication infrastructure and strong momentum for change," said Mrs. Vittachi.

The international Convention on the Rights of the Child "had been ratified in all but five countries, and the preparation on national programmes of action to meet goals for children gave encouraging promise," she was quoted as saying.

Noting that some countries of the region had "substantial financial capacities," Mrs. Vittachi told the board that some of the poorer countries would continue to require external assistance to meet their goals in improving the status of their children.

"Prospects were good that more than half the countries in the region would reach the goals they had set for 1995," she said.

Mr. Fisher said the programmes that were approved involved a country-by-country approach and said the \$140 million did not represent total UNICEF expenditure for the Middle East and North Africa region for the next five years.

"For some countries it is for one year while for others it is two years and five years," he told the Jordan Times, adding that further programmes would be added and presented for approval as and when required.

The expenditure programme for Jordan was submitted in 1992, he said, adding that the allocation for the Kingdom was \$2 million per year.

The Middle East and North Africa regional office of UNICEF was moved to Amman from Beirut in 1984. In addition, the agency also runs a country office which covers Jordan, Syria, the occupied territories and Djibouti.

"We have put down deep roots here," said Mr. Fisher when asked whether the agency was contemplating any return to Beirut as some U.N. agencies are known to be doing after coming under Lebanese pressure.

"There are no such (UNICEF) plans or any consideration of any such plan," Mr. Fisher said.

Yemenis fight civil war

(Continued from page 1)

Egypt might suggest sending Arab troops to Yemen.

A League delegation sent on Thursday to mediate was unable to reach Yemen after Sanaa airport was hit.

Previous mediation efforts by Arab states have failed to reconcile President Saleh and Mr. Beidh.

The rivals accused each other of conspiring to split the impoverished country of nearly 13 million people on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula.

Aden Radio said northern fighter planes bombed Aden's airport, power station, oil refinery, port and television station. The northern military command denied that.

Several people were killed or wounded when the airport's terminal building was hit, Aden radio said. Diplomats had said the airport was badly damaged in an earlier air raid.

A northern military com-

mand statement broadcast on Sanaa radio denied that northern planes had bombed Aden's key installations saying they were "the property of Yemen and should be protected by the Yemeni people."

Shipping and oil sources have said that oil production and loading operations have not been affected by the fighting.

The port of Aden has resumed tanker operations after a day's shutdown ordered as a precaution after nearby fighting, industry sources in London said.

One shipping source, whose company was sending a tanker of crude oil to the Aden refinery, said operations had returned to normal by early Friday.

"We have spoken with the head of the Aden refinery who told us that the port has reopened and that we can take our tanker there with no problems," he said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Le Monde Sous Maris
18:30 Dossier De La Serenita
19:00 News in French
19:15 Ushuaia
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 Charlie Chaplin
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 The Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air
21:00 The Campbells
22:00 News in English
22:30 The Last Bastion

PRAYER TIMES

04:15 Fajr
05:40 Sunrise
12:32 Dhuhr
16:12 Asr
19:23 Maghreb
20:50 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624390
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
St. La Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terzian Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 625226

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328

German-speaking Evangelical Church Tel. 641195

The Latter-day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will rise further becoming around average with winds southeasterly light to moderate. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 9/25

Amman 18/33

Deserts 7/27

Jordan Valley 17/32

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 22, Amman 30 Humidity readings:

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

Amman 22 per cent, Amman 24 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Jamil Tarif 794710
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 855446
Dr. Fayez Al Dabbas 759155
Dr. Jamal Ja'bari 796460
Firas pharmacy 661912
Al Aqsa pharmacy 678336
Nairoukh pharmacy 626672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsi pharmacy 637660
Najla pharmacy 847632

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 63041
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 405800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 66101
Jordan Television 731111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 815615

HOSPITALS

Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53300

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:30 Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
09:45 New Delhi (RJ)
10:25 Amman (RJ)
10:35 Dhahran (RJ)
10:40 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
11:00 Beirut (RJ)
11:00 Colombo (RJ)
16:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:55 Cairo (RJ)
19:20 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
19:30 London, Berlin (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 Vienna (OA)
15:45 Paris, Brussels (AF)
19:45 Dubai (RJ)
20:30 Paris, Damascus (AF)
23:25 Amsterdam (KL)
06:35 Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:00 Beirut (RJ)
08:00 Amman (RJ)
08:30 Amman, New York (RJ)
12:30 Amman, Paris, Brussels (AF)
12:35 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
13:45 London (RJ)
13:55 Damascus, Larnaca (RJ)
14:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
15:45 Jeddah (RJ)
16:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
16:00 Jeddah (RJ)
16:30 London (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:15 Beirut (ME)
13:50 Amman (RJ)
14:00 Amman, Paris (AF)
14:00 Amman, London (KL)
14:00 Amman, Cairo (MS)

HAJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in file per kg.

Apple 550/650
Banana 600/650
Banana (Mukammal) 620
Cabbage 250/300
Carrot 300/280
Cauliflower 270/200
Cucumbers (small) 180/120
Cucumbers (large) 380/220
Eggplant 200/120
Garlic 520/480
Green beans 240/180
Lemon 140/100
Marrow (large) 220/120
Marrow (small) 420/300
Mushrooms 380/220
Onion (dry) 160/100
Onion (green) 240/180
Peas 340/240
Pepper (hot) 340/220
Pepper (sweet) 350/220
Potato 380/220
Spinach 300/200
String beans 520/350
Watermelon 270/170
Vine Leaves 650/370

Jordan thanks France for stand on Aqaba inspections

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan voiced appreciation for France's decision to stop its participation in the multi-national inspection force that has been inspecting Aqaba-bound ships.

Agence France Press (AFP) quoted a Jordanian official here as saying that France's decision reflects its commitment to the international legitimacy and its upholding of the principles of international justice.

The French embassy here said Wednesday Paris has decided to halt its contribution to the monitoring of the implementation of the international embargo affecting Aqaba-bound shipping.

It said that the decision took effect immediately, following requests by Jordan to replace sea-based inspections with the onshore inspections.

It said that the decision was taken in close coordination with the U.S. and that His Majesty King Hussein and the U.N. secretary general, Boutros Ghali, were informed.

Jordan, which has announced the suspension of its participation in the Middle East peace process until the siege on the port of Aqaba was lifted, has reached an agreement with U.S. providing for land-based verification by a neutral side.

Patriarch condoles King, praises Jordan's respect for freedom, human rights

By Karouza Jadoun
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan and the Jordanian Catholic community welcomed the official visit of Beatitude Patriarch Maximos Hakim. The Patriarch of Antioch, all the Orient, Alexandria and Jerusalem is scheduled to meet high ranking Jordanian officials to offer his condolences for the passing away of Queen Mother Zein Al Sharaf and to discuss current issues in the region.



Patriarch Maximos Hakim

The 86-year-old patriarch, who is the highest ranking Melchite leader, arrived Thursday morning accompanied by Bishop Yohanna Mansour and Archimandrite George Haddad.

The patriarch held a high mass at the Melchite Catholic Cathedral in Jabal Amman and delivered a speech in which he thanked Greek Catholic Archbishop in Jordan George Al Mur for inviting him to visit the Kingdom and congratulated His Majesty King Hussein for his 41st anniversary of the assumption of his constitutional powers. He also praised Jordan for the freedom and respect for human rights it grants its citizens and lauded the spirit of tolerance between citizens, with no discrimination between Muslims and Christians.

Later, in a television interview, the patriarch hailed King Hussein's wisdom and prayed for the late Queen Mother "to rest in peace."

Greek Catholic Father Nabil Haddad told the Jordan Times that "His Beatitude is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and members of both Houses of Parliament."

"The patriarch will also meet some Muslim religious leaders and visit some private and public institutions later this week," said Father Haddad. It is also planned for the patriarch to visit Zarqa, Irbid and Karak, for three days, where he will hold masses.

The patriarchs Patriarch Hakim presides over in Alexandria and Antioch were established in 325 A.D. and that of Jerusalem in 451 A.D. Patriarch Hakim was elected patriarch in 1967 after spending 24 years serving as bishop in the West Bank town of Acre and Galilee.

The patriarch and the accompanying delegation were received by Minister of State Adel Isheid, the Lebanese ambassador to Amman, Greek Melchite Catholic Archbishop in Jordan George Al Mur, Catholic community leader Bishop Salim Sayegh, Armenian Orthodox Bishop in Jordan Vahan Topalian, Bishop Sylvester Far, Right Reverend Monsignor Raouf Najjar, Father Nabil Haddad and other churchmen and members of the Catholic churches in Amman.

The patriarch, who is the 171st patriarch of the dynasty of the Antiochian patriarchs, will hold a press conference later during his visit, according to Father Haddad. The patriarch is also due to hold daily Thanksgiving prayers during his visit before leaving the Kingdom on May 13.

Crown Prince: Peace in the region is bound to pave the way for international economic, political cooperation

PARIS (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Thursday that success of the Middle East peace process, based on international legitimacy, was bound to pave the way for a new framework of international economic and political cooperation.

"Indeed, with the end of the cold war we are now standing at the threshold of a new phase in international relations and by adopting sound policies we can contribute towards the enhancement of world security, peace and cooperation," said Prince Hassan in an address delivered at the opening of a seminar on Franco-Jordanian economic cooperation, held in Paris.

"France and Jordan have been tied for years by strong bonds of friendship and unique geo-political and economic cooperation, and long before the end of the cold war France has been calling for and aiming at further development between Europe and the other countries on the Mediterranean Sea and the Arab World," said Prince Hassan in his address delivered on his behalf by Industry and Trade Minister Rima Khalaf.

"France has given its support to Jordan's ideas and proposals on the conclusion of a declaration of principles on the Arab-Israeli negotiations, and the European Union in September 1993 endorsed a set of policies aimed at promoting European nations' relations with the Arab World," added the Crown Prince.

These principles, he said, aim at narrowing the huge gap in the living standards between the two sides, long-term cooperation for regional security and handling of such basic issues like the question of refugees, water resources and energy.

"In my view, the right approach to handle such matters and promote cooperation hinges on the attainment of a just and durable settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, based on the international legitimacy

and U.N. Security Council resolutions," continued the Crown Prince.

Referring to the Jordanian endeavours, the Crown Prince said that the Kingdom has embarked on implementing an integrated economic reform programme which, according to European Union experts, places Jordan among the countries most committed to and implementing economic reform.

Citing examples, the Crown Prince said that Jordan managed to address the deficit in the annual budget by reducing it from 25 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 1990 to six per cent in 1993 and has reduced the inflation rate from 20 per cent in 1989 to 4.5 per cent in 1993.

But he noted that Jordan still suffers from high unemployment rates, which currently run at 13 per cent, down from 18 per cent in 1991, and faces a huge external debt which resulted from the Kingdom's shouldering the burden

of the Arab-Israeli conflict and from giving refuge to waves of displaced people, numbering around 1.5 million.

Despite Jordan's successes in socio-economic development while struggling to pay off the debt which now stands at around \$7.5 billion, the country still faces the problem of dealing with more displaced persons, forcibly evicted from their homeland, he said. "It is hoped that this burden would be alleviated through the achievement of peace that would take care of the refugees, water and other problems facing the countries of the region," added Prince Hassan.

Thanking France for its economic aid to Jordan, the Crown Prince said that aid from France and other friendly nations has enabled the Kingdom to reschedule its foreign debts at the Paris and London Clubs.

Furthermore, France is to be thanked for its recent initiative to invest in Jordan projects of

the French private sector, said the Crown Prince.

Noting that the investment climate in Jordan is now better than at any time in the past, Prince Hassan mentioned a study by the World Bank which indicated that the Amman Financial Market was the biggest in the Arab World as it deals with transactions by 110 firms with a total market capital of \$5 billion.

Referring to foreign investments, the Crown Prince said that the nature of foreign investment is more important than the volume.

"It is hoped that the French private investments in Jordan would focus on the transfer of modern technology and modern management and on serving as a model for new investments in the future," said Prince Hassan.

Noting that the Paris meeting, which was organised by Jordanian and French businessmen, was tackling trade, industrial technology,

agriculture and tourism, the Crown Prince said that bolstering ties between French and Jordanian businessmen constituted a basic step towards determining the areas of joint investments.

Jordan Businessmen Association Vice Chairman Hasani Tabbaa and Michael Habib, head of the French-Arab Chamber of Commerce, were among the main speakers at the seminar which is designed to promote Franco-Jordanian economic and trade relations.

Mr. Tabbaa said that the seminar is designed to help Jordan increase its exports of phosphate, potash, fruit and vegetables to France and other European countries.

Noting that Jordanians annually consume \$150 million worth of French products, Mr. Tabbaa said that Jordanian businessmen were trying to adjust the balance of trade, which is heavily in favour of France, through more Jordanian exports to the French markets.

Energy talks to discuss cooperation

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Pan-Arab energy conference opening in Cairo Saturday will review studies conducted on sources of energy, Arab petroleum industries, oil-related issues and cooperation in energy matters among the Arab states, according to Walid Asfour minister of energy and mineral resources.

The minister, who is leading the Jordanian delegation to the four-day meeting, said on the eve of the conference that discussion will also cover scopes of cooperation among Arab countries in electricity, natural gas, oil products as well as energy-related issues which have an impact on the environment and development of the Arab World.

The minister, who is to deliver Jordan's address to the conference, the fifth of its kind, said that he will review Jordan's energy endeavours and prospects for cooperation with other Arab countries in energy matters.

On the sidelines of the pan-Arab meeting, the ministers of energy of Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Turkey will hold a meeting to review practical steps taken for the implementation of a power linkage project among their countries.

In January 1994, representatives of Jordan and the other four countries involved in the project signed five agreements, embarking on the first step of the project which should be completed by the year 2002.

According to Mr. Asfour, Jordan and Egypt are already working on linking up their networks. He said that the linkup between Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Turkey was expected to cost \$130 million and would be completed as a first stage of the whole project by 1997.

The second stage, which involves linking the grids of Syria, Iraq and Turkey, is expected to cost \$254.8 million and would be completed by 2002, said the minister.

According to sources at the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), the project would save up to \$2 billion in annual electricity-generation costs, reduce power failures and boost socio-economic development in the five countries.

The Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank had pledged to finance the project.

RJ airplane narrowly escapes air raid on Sanaa airport

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A Royal Jordanian (RJ) plane carrying 240 passengers landed in Amman late Thursday after a narrow escape from the first air raid on Sanaa airport as the Yemeni political crisis burst out into an outright war early Thursday, passengers aboard the aircraft said Friday.

The RJ TriStar was the last civilian aircraft to take off from Sanaa before Yemen cut itself off from the outside world on Thursday. All telecommunications lines were down on Friday and very little details of the strife emerged (see page one).

RJ Captain Anwar Shehadeh, who piloted the plane, said a rocket narrowly missed the plane as it was reversing to take off.

"We heard a terrifying noise, then the plane shuddered as the missile landed behind the aircraft," Capt. Shehadeh told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, after he landed the jetliner here late Thursday carrying 100 Jordanians, 40 Italians and the rest mostly Arabs.

Passengers said everything had appeared normal as they boarded the plane at Sanaa airport on the aircraft's return leg to Amman of the regular flight in the pre-dawn hours.

"It was around 5.20 and the plane was reversing itself preparing to take off," said one of them. "Suddenly there was a loud explosion and we thought the plane had hit another aircraft on the tarmac," said the witness, who did not want to be identified.

"But then it appeared that it was an air raid," said the witness. "We could see a large crater left by the bomb. It was only a few metres from the plane."

"It was a very narrow escape," said another passenger, who also preferred anonymity. "A few metres made all the difference for our lives."

"We could see people shooting upwards and the loud fire from anti-aircraft guns," said the witness. "We also saw several fighter jets taking off from around us."

Panic broke out among the 180 or so passengers, but RJ Jordanian security men and RJ crew managed to "cool them down," said the witness.

"But then it appeared that everybody had fled the control tower and there was no one to instruct the plane what to do next," the witness told the Jordan Times.

The RJ ground staff who remained at the airport managed to get a ramp to the plane and got everyone out and into the departure lounge in about

30 minutes' time, the passengers said.

By then the army had taken over the airport and soldiers were swarming all over the place, they said.

As they fled into the departure lounge, more loud explosions were heard, presumably the second wave of the air raid and "everybody hit the ground."

The situation cleared a few minutes later, and the passengers and crew remained in the lounge until around 9 a.m., four hours after the first air raid; then they were taken to a hotel in Sanaa, where they spent the day until the evening.

Passengers had high praise for the pilot, Captain Shehadeh, and his crew. "Throughout the ordeal, the crew, particularly the captain, were brilliant," said a passenger. "They managed not only to keep a cool head and calm the passengers, but were a great help to address the needs of the people."

As they waited in the airport lounge, the witness said, "we could see people in civilian clothes come in, show some identity cards and leave with machine guns."

As they were driven from the airport to the hotel, "the streets were mostly deserted, but those on the streets were

armed," said the witness.

At the hotel the situation was also "tense," the witness said. "From the hotel rooms we could hear gunshots from here and there and several streets were sealed off."

The passengers were taken back to the airport in the mid-afternoon and the plane took off on the three-hour flight to Amman at 4 p.m. after being cleared through Yemeni skies by army soldiers manning the control tower.

"Some passengers, apparently rattled by the experience in the morning, called off the trip altogether," said the witness.

The RJ TriStar was the only civilian plane at Sanaa airport on Thursday. No other aircraft was in sight, not even those of national Yemeni carrier, Yemenia, they said.

"But we saw warplanes taking off and landing," said the witness.

Reports said jetfighters and bombers of both northern and southern Yemenis raided each other's installations on Thursday.

When the plane landed in Amman it had 240 people, many of them who decided to leave Yemen in the face of the crisis, and including three cockpit crew and five cabin attendants in addition to regular flight security personnel.

RJ flights to Yemen suspended

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Royal Jordanian's twice weekly flights to Sanaa and Aden in north and south Yemen are suspended until the airports in the Arab country, are officially operating normally again, according to a spokesman for the national airline Friday.

The military in Yemen have taken control of the airports and closed them to civilian flights until further notice; until then no RJ aircraft can fly to Yemen, Monib Toukan, RJ assistant vice president for public relations, told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Toukan was commenting on the incident at Sanaa airport which delayed an RJ scheduled flight to Amman for 12 hours Thursday.

Upon their arrival in Amman, the passengers and crew were welcomed at the airport by Dr. Khaled Al Karaki, advisor to His Majesty King Hussein, along with Dr. Tareq Suheimat, minister of communications.

Dr. Karaki conveyed to the passengers King Hussein's congratulations for their safe return.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

FILMS

- ★ Film in Spanish entitled "Ay Carmela" at the Spanish Cultural Centre at 6:30 p.m. (Tel. 613077).
- ★ Chilean film entitled "La Frontera" (The Frontier) at the main theatre of the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m. (115 minutes).

FASHION SHOW

- ★ Fashion show and silver accessories by artist Hana Sadiq Beraoud (with the music of Mounir Beshir) at the royal ball room of the Philadelphia Hotel at 6:30 p.m. (Tel. 607100).

BALLET

- ★ Ballet performance by Al-Abhilya School for Girls students at the main theatre of the Royal Cultural Centre at 4:00 p.m.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture in Arabic entitled "The Phenomenon of Agents in Intifada" by Dr. Saleh Abdul Jawad from Bir Zeit University at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of silk paintings by artist Sonad Neme Akrouk at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Drawings exhibition by Nazareth School students at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by artists Walid Sheet and Nazem Hamed at Alia Art Gallery (Tel. 639303).
- ★ "Exhibition of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Food Industries '94" at the World Exhibition Centre, University Road (Tel. 837218, 847113).
- ★ Art exhibition by Bashir Ibrahim at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by five Egyptian artists at Darat Al Fann at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Lurweid. Also showing "permanent" exhibition of 56 Arab contemporary artists (Tel. 643251/2).
- ★ Exhibition by artist Mohammad Mubarradin at Ab'ad Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition by artists Dr. Ali Ghoni, Hussein De'sh, Adnan Al Sharif, Abdul Hussein Tawaji, Sabaan Abbas, and Hafez Al Droubi at Ofall Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).



CREATIVE FLAIR: Iraqi designer Hana Sadiq Beraoud wears one of her own creations which will be shown at a fashion show of her 1994 collection including silver accessories at Amman's Philadelphia Hotel Saturday at 6:30 p.m.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
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Sad day for Yemen

THE ERUPTION of an all-out war between North and South Yemen is a major setback to Arab unity. Repeated efforts were made, especially by Jordan, Oman and other nations, to contain the political and military feud between Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh and to save the Yemeni unity which many Arabs looked up to as an example to be followed.

His Majesty King Hussein invested so much time and energy to reestablish fraternal relations between the two parts of Yemen and convened an all Yemeni conference in Amman last February for this purpose. The Amman communiqué signed by all Yemeni leaders, including President Saleh and Vice-President Beidh and Speaker of Parliament Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar promised to put the Yemeni house back in order, preserving above all national unity. All these relentless efforts were, however, laid to waste as evidenced by the large-scale armed conflict that is engulfing the country now. Sad to note that the unity which was struck with so much promise between the North and South in May 1990 is all but dead and only a miracle could save it.

The obvious implication of the failure to recent the union is that no amount of external forces can replace the local determination and will to unify the country.

It appears that the political cohesion between the two parts of the united country was never attained, anyway. And the best proof of this is the refusal of the two "regimes" to unify their respective armed forces as they kept them as some kind of reservoir to roll back the unity that was formed at and by the top echelon of the two territories. With Sanaa remaining the bastion of traditional and conservative elements and Aden continuing to be steadfast in upholding its socialist doctrine it was only a matter of time before it would become obvious that oil and water could not mix.

The clear flaw in the Yemeni experiment to forge union lies squarely in the fact that democracy as such was never exercised to attain it. The non-involvement of the people of the country whether they come from the North and the South and the continued promotion of tribalism as basis for the political structure of the nation may have led to the inevitable situation of today. All that Arabs and non-Arabs can do now is to pray that the bloodshed in Yemen cease and that the process of restructuring the unification of the country on sound and rational basis could begin as soon as hostilities could be brought to an end.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

PERHAPS IT is a unanimous feeling among the Arab masses that the signing of the Cairo accord by Palestinian and Israeli leaders Wednesday marked a turning point in the future of the Palestinian people and indeed in the whole Middle East conflict, according to Al Ra'i daily. The paper said that only the future stage can determine whether the accord would succeed because everything is now left to the Israelis, whether to allow the Palestinians to have their say in their autonomous region and whether the Jewish settlement programmes would continue or not. It remains to be seen if the Israelis are truly willing to pull out their forces and dismantle any of their settlements or if they are tactically redeploying their troops and retaining all of the settlements, the paper said. It is true that the ceremony for signing the accord has ended, but, said the paper, the deal has directed all eyes towards the occupied territories where the applications on the ground should start in the coming days. In short, added the paper, what remains to be seen is whether the Israelis are truly willing to comply with the requirements of the international legitimacy and the U.N. resolutions.

IN THE VIEW of Saleh Eklour, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, the Cairo accord on implementing the autonomy rule in parts of the occupied Arab lands came about as a result of pressures on the Palestinian leaders and not as a result of negotiations. The Egyptian-Israeli-American pressures were instrumental in forcing Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat to sign the Cairo accord and thus making him sell out the rights of the Palestinians in their homeland, said the writer. The last scene of pressure was displayed on television when viewers witnessed the signatories haggling over the details, with Mr. Arafat being pressured into signing the maps as well as the accord itself, he added. The Palestinian people were not jubilant over the conclusion of the deal because they saw with their own eyes their leaders selling out their rights through the deal which gives Israel the upper hand in the autonomy rule, said the writer. He said those who have been optimistic would have their dreams dashed away when they witness the king of autonomy rule Mr. Arafat, has brought to the Palestinian people.

Jordanian Perspective

Tackling the Yemeni challenge

By Dr. Musa Keilani

WE WERE hoping against hope the situation in Yemen would not develop the way it did, slowly sliding into civil strife. Fears were always there that reckless actions based in irrational thinking could push the situation to the brink and hence the concerted diplomacy that Jordan and others exerted in the country to avert a bloody civil war.

For us in Jordan the worsening crisis in Yemen is very painful, having engaged in an all-out effort to reconcile the north and south and maintain the unity of the country based on the understanding that no one but the Yemenis stood to pay the price for chaos and a possible redismemberment of the country.

Our brotherly feelings towards the Yemeni people and the strong ties that bind Jordan with Yemen as well as our anxiety that the first two Arab countries to unite on the basis of democracy were the main factors behind us going out on a limb seeking an amicable solution based on the very principles of democracy, human rights, freedoms and justice.

But now that the Yemenis seem to be more interested in waging a fratricidal war than reconciliation, we cannot but assume that a civil war in the country leading to a separation of the north from the south and the abortion of the nascent democracy there was the predetermined objective of external forces.

In retrospect then, the efforts that Jordan and Oman undertook, in concert with Europe and the United States, to bring President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh to sign a reconciliation accord in Amman in February were doomed to failure from the start.

It would appear that those who pulled and continue to pull the strings in Yemen had no intention to allow any reconciliation to succeed. And the tribal-oriented thinking among Yemenis provided a breeding ground for that objective.

There are many theories behind the seemingly irreconcilable differences between the southern and northern Yemenis. These include the fears of some that a blooming democracy in the Arabian Peninsula does not bode well for some others; that the southerners were having second thoughts of the May 1990 Yemeni merger after promising signs of oil were found in their territory; that the north was perceived as seeking to turn the merger into domination, and that there was inequitable distribution of the resources and revenues of the country and this led to wide discontent and frustration.

Another widely-held theory is that the southerners could not accept a secondary role in running the country while a northerner remained president, particularly that they were used to running their life in a different style and manner until the merger.

No matter what the motivations and considerations behind the slide into chaos in Yemen, the root cause could be easily identified as unclear perceptions and gaping holes in the understanding of what democracy is all about.

Quite simply, had there been a clear acceptance among the Yemenis that democracy means equal rights and responsibilities and it was upto them to decide their fate through the ballot box, we would not be seeing what we see today in the country.

When the Yemenis went to the first polls of their united country in April 1993, the hopes of all democracy-loving people everywhere were high that the way of life in the region had taken a well-founded direction towards a dramatic change.

Obviously, in our optimism and jubilation that Yemenis were emulating what we did here in Jordan since 1989, we overlooked the fact that not everyone in the region shared those sentiments and some were in fact very worried over the Yemeni turn towards democracy.

But that does not mean laying the entire blame for the crisis in Yemen at the doorsteps of external forces. The Yemeni people themselves have the major share of responsibility and blame of the problems that they face today.

It is naive to argue in this era of instant communications and access to information on how life is like around the globe that the Yemenis did not get the proper exposure to what democracy is all about. Granted, many regions in the country are underdeveloped and radio and television may even be a novelty to them. But then, they are not the ones that are behind today's crisis in Yemen. On the contrary, intellectuals, statesmen, diplomats and others with an enlightened understanding of how the world works are making the decisions on both sides of the fence.

They clearly understand the norms of democracy and perhaps this understanding itself is part of their frenzied attempts to scramble the situation.

The problems of underdevelopment in Yemen were indeed a catalyst in the events that led to today's crisis, including the failure of the unity government to properly address the problems of poverty and unemployment and demands for better living conditions for the Yemeni people.

Again, it was a vicious circle. For the first three years after the merger, the developments in Yemen towards improving the lot of the Yemeni people were of an acceptable level, given the magnitude of the problems in the country of 13 million people.

On the one hand, the crisis that developed after the elections tied the hands of everyone in implementing much-needed development projects that could boost the feeling among Yemenis that they stood to lose something if the unity of the country was challenged.

On the other, as long as the government was unable to provide an input that did make a difference to the life styles of the people, confidence in the new system and unity were eroded.

Despite all arguments and theories, the fact remains that we as Arabs have a moral obligation to do everything we can to prevent bloodshed in Yemen. It is the responsibility of all Arab as leaders to give priority to finding an immediate mechanism to prevent a full-blown civil war and then launch parallel efforts for reconciliation in Yemen.

History will not forgive them if the Arab leaders did not move now. The entire Yemeni countryside is awash with weapons, and what we risk today is an annihilation of a people and identity in the Arabian Peninsula if we do not move swiftly and firmly to put an end to the fratricide in Yemen.

It is simply unacceptable for us in Jordan to witness Arab leaders blaming the entire crisis on the Yemeni people and conveniently arguing that they could do little if the Yemeni people were bent upon destroying themselves and their country.

An opportunity has presented itself to the Arab League to reassert itself as the true representative and umbrella for the more than 200 million Arabs and prove itself as an institution which was founded for the very purpose as settling problems among Arab brethren.

What we need today is concerted Arab League action with a sense of purpose and direction towards averting a civil war in Yemen and then chalk out clear perceptions of what all sides involved in the Yemeni crisis want with a view to working out a national salvation agreement that takes into consideration the complaints and grievances of all. Sure enough, not everyone could be made happy, but raising the awareness of the Yemeni people of what the Yemeni nation stands to lose could be a first step towards preventing Yemen becoming the Lebanon of the 70s and 80s.

Clinton's foreign policy debacle

By Donald M. Rothberg
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The toughest foreign policy questions thrown at U.S. President Bill Clinton were about the world's smallest countries, which have caused some of his biggest headaches.

Was he ready to use force in Haiti? Was he flip-flopping on Bosnia?

The questioning reflected a reality that has dogged the 15 months of his presidency: It is difficult to reset America's course in the world.

Through most of a recent 90-minute Cable News Network (CNN) foreign policy forum, Mr. Clinton responded good naturedly to questions. But when accused of flip-flopping on Bosnia, his anger flared.

"There have been no constant flip-flops, madam," he replied. He went on to deny that his campaign rhetoric had been stronger than his policies in office.

"I ran for president saying that I would do my best to limit ethnic cleansing and to see the United States play a more active role in resolving the problem in Bosnia," he said. "And we have been much more active than my predecessor was in every way from the beginning."

Later, he admitted that "all leaders sometimes have had to back and fill and alter their course throughout history."

Few doubted the relevance to U.S. national interests when questions involved the Soviet Union. But in a world without another superpower the issues aren't always that clear cut.

In a world where problems often come in small packages, Mr. Clinton pointed out that "not every issue is one that you can put the entire wealth, the entire military might, the entire prestige of the United States on the line for."

He defended his foreign policy team, saying "It's just that they're plowing new ground."

It's from lingering crises in Bosnia, Haiti and Somalia that Mr. Clinton is learning this: It is much tougher to formulate foreign policy inside the Oval Office than to critique from the outside.

Candidate Clinton demanded tougher U.S. action to curb the killing in Bosnia. He wanted a more welcoming attitude toward Haitian refugees. Somalia ended up as his December surprise.

On Jan. 20, 1993, Mr. Clinton inherited a world of problems that defied solutions.

He argued in Atlanta that he hasn't waffled on Bosnia. But there is no question that even before taking office he reversed his campaign position on welcoming Haitian refugees.

By the time he took office, Mr. Clinton had adopted predecessor George Bush's policy of turning back refugee

boats headed for U.S. shores.

Now, Mr. Clinton is raising the specter of military action to return democratically elected Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power. Ironically, Mr. Bush says he has changed his view and believes the United States should break from Mr. Aristide.

Russia, the Middle East and trade are big issues on which Mr. Clinton claims success. Ultimately, they may give Mr. Clinton a reputation as a strong foreign policy president.

But at this point in his presidency, the world is unruly and resistant to the efforts by the United States and its allies to make it behave.

Like John F. Kennedy, the president who inspired his entry into politics, Mr. Clinton is finding it more difficult than he expected to reset America's course in the world.

He borrowed a quote from Mr. Kennedy to say that foreign policy problems "had proven 'more difficult than I imagined them to be.'"

At the end of Mr. Clinton's first year, the journal Foreign Affairs was asking whether his foreign policy would eventually merit comparison with that of Warren Harding or Harry Truman. The author, Paul Wolfowitz, a former official in the Reagan and Bush administrations, noted that Mr. Harding received early plaudits while pursuing policies that "helped to produce the debacle of the 1930s."

After what Mr. Wolfowitz described as a "stumbling performance" his first year in office, Mr. Truman developed a foreign policy held up to this day as a model of America's role in the world.

Ironically, Mr. Clinton gets higher marks for the big problems.

The administration's policy towards Russia and the other states that emerged from the wreckage of the Soviet Union gets bipartisan support. The U.S.-Soviet nuclear confrontation no longer holds the world in terror.

In the Middle East, with the United States continuing an activist role, the peace process is making headway despite periodic outbreaks of violence.

South Africa has held its first multiracial election and Mr. Clinton declared that "I'm proud of America's role in helping to make the miracle happen."

Mr. Clinton also can claim two significant victories on trade policy — congressional approval of the North American Free Trade Agreement and successful completion of an updated global trade agreement, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

On the question of how to deal with China, Mr. Clinton has stayed fairly close to his campaign demand that the United States link trade privileges to Beijing's human rights policies.



THE WEEK IN PRINT

The Cairo accord: a sell-out or a first step on the road to statehood?

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

THE SIGNING in Cairo Wednesday of an accord for the implementation of the Palestinian autonomy rule attracted most of columnists' attention in the Arabic press in the past week. Other articles tackled the peace process and a host of domestic affairs.

Under the title, "an agreement between Arafat and the Jews," a columnist in Al Ra'i daily said that the Cairo accord represented a dangerous turning point in the life of the whole Arab Nation, and not the Palestinians alone. Deputy Bassam Elnoush said that the danger inherent in the accord threatens the whole of the Arab Islamic Nations.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily described the Cairo accord as a starting point, despite its flaws and shortcomings. Mahmoud Rimawi said that one should admit that though the accord did not usher in a complete peace, the agreement was to be considered a transitional solution enabling the Palestinians to exercise the right to handle their own affairs on their national soil. The writer said that the Palestinians have a long way to go in their struggle to regain all of their lands and rights but it should be noted that the accord was a small step on the long way to achieving that goal.

Addressing the same topic, Mohammad Kawash, a writer in Al Dustour, said that the signing of the accord was definitely not the end of the road for the Palestinians. The Palestinian leadership ought

to realise that the Palestinian people in the occupied lands want to see the agreement implemented on the ground and want their leaders to cling hard to their continued struggle aimed at ensuring a complete Israeli military withdrawal from all lands after the Jericho and Gaza agreement has been implemented, he said.

Regardless of the critics of the accord and the pessimism shrouding the minds of many Arabs, one cannot dismiss the fact that the limited Palestinian-Israeli peace has allowed thousands to return to their homeland, said Issa Shueibi, a columnist in Al Dustour daily. The writer said that he believed the accord enables the Palestinian people to climb the first step leading to eventual freedom and breaking the first link in the long chain of frustrations, pain and setbacks over the past 45 years.

In the view of Saleh Al Qallab, the Cairo accord represented the first step towards the creation of a Palestinian state. The columnist, who writes for Al Dustour, said that one should not forget that Israel had in the past wanted to liquidate the Palestine question and to negate the presence of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). He said it should be noted that Yitzhak Rabin, who signed the accord with Mr. Arafat, had been one of the fiercest hawks that had fought the Palestinians in Lebanon and the Palestinian lands and one who opposed

any idea of a Palestinian entity... In the light of these facts, one can rest assured that the continued Palestinian struggle would end with the emergence of the Palestinian state, said Mr. Qallab.

The Cairo deal ended more than seven long months of hard negotiations which were often marked by an upsurge of violence in the occupied Arab lands, said Al Dustour daily. The paper said that the accord can be viewed as a first step towards regaining Palestinian rights but all depends on whether Israel would be committed to its implementation.

Israel is expected to implement the Cairo accord while the PLO leadership is expected to live up to expectation and prove its capability in handling political, social and economic affairs, said Mohammad Daoud, a columnist in Al Dustour. The writer said that if these steps are taken and initial success is achieved, the accord would win credibility and would pave the ground for the next step and final step of freedom for the rest of the occupied lands.

Abdullah Al Qaq, a columnist in Al Dustour, hailed the recent measures by the interior ministry concerning the travel and residence of West Bankers in Jordan as a very positive step in the right direction. The writer said that the measures put into practice the slogan of a Jordanian-Palestinian national unity. Facilitating travel and residence for the West

Bankers reflects the Kingdom's keenness on living up to its promises of providing support and help to the Palestinian brothers and sisters across the river, he added.

Salameh Eklour, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily, criticised the Ministry of Labour for allowing guest workers a free hand in the labour market. How can the government deal with the unemployment question while most of the Jordanian companies are allowed to employ tens of thousands of non-Jordanian workers in the stores, gas stations, farms, bakeries and factories? asked the writer. To make matters worse, he said, official government firms and institutions continue to employ non-Jordanians in their business. He said the government has a duty to find work for the unemployed whose increasing number create a fertile soil for crime and deteriorating social conditions.

Ahmad Dabbas, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily, said that appealing to the public to refrain from damaging trees and harming the environment can achieve no result. Citing a Ministry of Agriculture statement giving figures about the enormous losses in trees every year, the writer said that if calls on the public to protect the trees are not enough, the concerned parties ought to turn to the Ministry of Education for help because it can teach the young a true love for the country and its environment and natural resources.

هكذا في كل حال

Department of Antiquities 'powerless' to stop theft and smuggling of artifacts

By Ian Atallah
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The illegal excavation and smuggling of Jordan's ancient archaeological treasures has become a problem of major proportions in the Kingdom, Safwan Al Tal, director of Jordan's Department of Antiquities, told the Jordan Times.

Moreover, certain bands of illegal excavators "are conducting prearranged work on behalf of commercial centres both inside and outside the country," he said.

Although his department has no hard statistics, said Mr. Tal, "I've been informed by many staff members of the department about numerous violations in many sites in Jordan." Since the Department of Antiquities began to expand its cooperative activities with the Public Security Department (PSD) recently, "we captured many such items at border sites and airports."

He stated that his sense of alarm had pushed him to personally ask the minister of tourism for aid to deal with the problem.

One local newspaper, Al Ahali, claimed in an article published on April 28 that an unnamed European ambassador to Jordan had actually attempted to purchase a large collection of pieces illegally excavated in the Karak Governorate from "its owners" before the collection was found and seized by Jordanian authorities.

Mr. Tal explained that the grave robbers' crimes were not the sort to attract high levels of public attention because they occurred in remote spots outside the public eye, as such illegal excavators target "hidden sites not seen by people and not under daily control."

And contrary to popular notions, he said, grave robbers are not necessarily searching for gold and silver; "the value of the objects is in their age — they take bowls, and jugs — mostly pottery."

"These people are selling the artifacts they find for three to five dinars to put bread in their mouths," Mr. Tal said, whereas such items will fetch

hundreds and even tens of thousands of dinars for middlemen in international collectors' markets.

"Who do we blame," he asked, "the poor people or the rich people behind the funding? Both share the blame, while we go about extinguishing our cultural heritage."

The Department of Antiquities and the PSD were stung into action at the beginning of April by a CNN news broadcast which filmed grave robbers digging in broad daylight at an ancient Bronze Age cemetery in the Ghor Safi. Over 900 artifacts from these illegal digs were eventually confiscated by Jordanian authorities, said Mr. Tal.

The cemetery shown on film by the CNN crew was already rifled and cratered from previous illegal excavations, and the broadcast stated that most of the grave robbers caught on film were merely "local farmers looking to earn a little extra money."

"There is no work now in the fields — why should we stay there all the time?" one robber asked the CNN crew.

The report also described Amman as a "thriving market" for illegally excavated finds.

Mr. Tal explained that despite the fact that it is explicitly against the law for anyone to excavate or export any Jordanian antiquities without approval from the Department of Antiquities, the numerous occurrences of such acts were currently beyond the department's ability to cope with due to its "lack of size."

"The department's problem is that we are currently engaged in having to control all of Jordan, and are responsible for every inch," he said. However, with over 100,000 archaeological sites currently documented and registered in Jordan, "the manpower is simply not available for us to go and dig," as most of the department's employees are needed to aid foreign archaeological expeditions coming to Jordan or to handle administrative duties, Mr. Tal explained.

And with only a little over 300 hired watchmen available to the department to guard



Director of the Department of Antiquities Safwan Al Tal (right) and PSD officials inspect some of the artifacts confiscated from illegal excavations performed in Ghor Al Safi

over such sites, "we still have thousands of sites which we cannot control," and which thus lie as easy prey to grave robbers.

Mr. Tal said that the main area of illegal diggers' activity in Jordan is the zone extending from the southern shores of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba, which contains many Bronze Age sites and funeral grounds in Ghor Safi, Bab Al Dira' and Wadi Araba.

The difficulty for authorities, he explained, lies in the fact that this area is especially difficult to monitor because it is a military zone "and a no-man's land. There are no people living there," which makes pilfering such sites a doubly easy task.

Mr. Tal said that the Department of Antiquities presently has a policy of financially compensating anyone who finds an ancient artifact and turns it over to the appropriate authorities with a reward based on the artifact's net worth.

However, he stressed, in his opinion a public information and awareness campaign was needed to awaken Jordanians to the importance of their country's ancient heritage.

"We modern Jordanians did not come from another planet. We evolved as a people on this rock and this soil, and these sites belong to our ancestors," he said.

"But so far, this philosophy has not been taken seriously by our people."

From peasants to revolutionaries to Palestinian policemen

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

A 7,000-strong Palestinian police force will begin its entry into Gaza and Jericho this week to oversee and support the establishment of Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories that Israel is willing to vacate.

But less than 72 hours before the first units of the Palestinian police force are expected to enter the occupied territories the policemen are still known as members of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA).

The PLA was founded months after the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) was founded under the leadership of Ahmed Shukairi in 1964. PLA units were formed in Gaza, Syria and Iraq.

Mostly armed and trained in the host countries, the PLA represents the fighting force that was evacuated from Lebanon after the Israeli invasion of that country in 1982.

Most of the PLA is composed of Palestinians who lived in refugee camps in Jordan, Gaza, the West Bank, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria. Most of them were from rural communities who were forced to leave their homes by advancing Israeli troops or who fled scenes of fighting.

"We went from being peasants to revolutionaries to policemen," is how one PLA official described the metamorphosis from a "liberation fighter" to a "traffic controller."

Many of the PLA men who are expected to take over security and public order under Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho feel bitter about their return to parts of Palestine.

"These are over 6,500 men who, ever since they can remember, have been training to liberate Palestine through military rather than diplomatic means," said Colonel Mohammad Ibrahim as he trained with his men at the PLA headquarters in Khaw last week. "They were a liberation force, a liberation

army. That's what they joined when they signed up, 10, 20, 30 years ago."

But today the "men in khaki" are preparing to change their mission as well as the colour of uniforms.

They have been ready for their return to the West Bank and Gaza since the Sept. 13, 1993, Oslo accords were signed, said the PLA commander in Jordan, Brigadier Mohammad Qudsieh.

The senior men in uniform are men like Brig. Qudsieh who joined the liberation movement in the 1960s. They are almost exclusively from the Palestine of 1948, or refugees. The "liberation" of their hometowns and villages is not on the agenda of the discussions between Israel and the PLO.

Most if not all of these men are undoubtedly loyal to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, but most appear to have a "heavy heart."

"This is not the solution to the Palestine problem that we had in mind," says a senior PLA official in Amman referring to the "Gaza-Jericho first" plan. The terms of the autonomy accord are likely to make any Palestinian force almost entirely dependent on the Israelis and Palestinian statehood seems out of the question for the moment, he said.

For those who did not envision a victorious war, a triumphant entry into the West Bank and Gaza would have been a second choice. Instead many fear they will not be "allowed" to enter with their guns.

Most have little confidence in the abilities of the PLO or the Arab countries to extract decent terms for an autonomous Palestine.

"We will exist under the mercy of the Israelis. That's not liberation — that's humiliation. I will go in and stay a while and leave. I will not agree to live in humiliation at the end of my days," said one 50-year-old colonel who says he will try to emigrate to Canada or Australia.

the problems they will face, specifically with local youths, once they enter as a police force.

"These kids see authority as the enemy. So far Israel has been the authority, but once we enter we too will be seen in a negative light," explained the colonel. "We don't want to end up shooting or arresting our own intifada kids for hooliganism."

Fears of confrontation with intifada youths are among the greatest worries of the police force.

Palestinian human rights activists such as Hanan Ashrawi and others have warned that the police force should not become yet another tool to oppress the Palestinians.

"There is a nasty rumour that we will be doing the dirty work on behalf of the Israelis," said Col. Mahmoud Gharbawi.

"That's not true. We will go to protect our people from Israeli attacks and not the other way round."

But Col. Gharbawi admitted that "problems are foreseen."

Going through photo albums of past battles that the PLA fought against Israelis in Lebanon and Jordan, Col. Gharbawi admits "the greatest challenge is yet to come."

Red Cross personnel educating senior officers of the PLA on the human rights aspects of police work agree.

"These men are soldiers. They have been trained to fight Israel. Now they will stand next to Israelis and maybe asked to shoot at Palestinians. It is a tremendously difficult task," one of several Swiss Red Cross human rights education officers told the Jordan Times.

According to a schedule announced by Palestinian negotiators, 6,000 policemen would enter the occupied territories over a three-week period to be followed by another 1,000 after a three-month period.

An additional 500 PLA members are based at the PLO headquarters in Tunis. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin announced that

up to 20,000 to 30,000 relatives of the policemen would also be allowed to return.

The total police force is to consist of 9,000 men; 20,000 of them will come from the occupied territories. Many of these have already been recruited and partially trained.

All members of the PLA are known to be loyal to the PLO, but recently Hamas leaders, hoping to get a foothold into the autonomy agreement, have pushed to have Hamas members included in the police force.

PLO officials say that Hamas members, if included in the police force, would be "in the lower rank and file."

Young Palestinian recruits for the police force are mostly in their late teens and early 20s who are signing up for a very different task than their older PLA predecessors. They will not have the "illusion" of being liberators but rather "peacekeepers," senior members of the PLA say.

Unlike their predecessors, they are "looking for a job" and do not necessarily have any political inclinations. Many, drawn from poor homes in refugee camps, want to "move up and out" of the economic misery. Without much education and training, they see the police force as a way out and maybe up in life.

"We will protect the Palestinians from the Israelis. We will protect the population from local hoodlums and theft," said one young recruit from the Jabal Al Hussein refugee camp in Amman.

In the scorching sun in Khaw, the PLA military camp north of Amman, young recruits are trained in military, police and human rights work.

It will be the young men who will eventually make up the rank and file of the Palestinian police force.

"They cannot understand how bitter we feel to have lost this battle or how humiliating it is for us to change from khaki to blue uniforms. Unlike us, they were never revolutionaries," said Col. Gharbawi overlooking the graduation of yet another group of young recruits.

Silent fears
The older guard of the PLA have been discussing

Artist represents mythology and mundanity in his works

By Ica Wahbeh

Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — Born in Palestine, living in Syria, having studied in Egypt and moved through the region, Mustafa Hallaj seems steeped both in the Mediterranean basin's mythology and its modern way of living.

His works, on display at the Baladna Art Gallery, range from as old as 1967 to now-days and even if the approach is different, the symbolism, the animal representations and the attention to details is present in all.

A sculptor and carver in the first place, Mr. Hallaj leaves the imprint of his chisel on his paintings as well.

A first group of works are sober, elegant, black and white prints. First carved on metal or wood, the drawings are then impressed on paper, the myriad of etched lines faithfully reproduced.

Mythology is ever present, as are metamorphosed human bodies, animals — chosen by the artist for their symbolism — the sun and the perfectly proportioned woman body, voluptuously curved and glorious in its nudity.

In most of this group of poster-like prints, proportions vary as the artist gives a predominant place to the major figure of the frame, at the same time not omitting the details of everything else present.

For example, a huge lion, bared fangs snarling and body taking more than a quarter of the print, represents the threat of the occupying power attacking a Palestinian village where smaller figures of villagers try to defend themselves.

Greek and Egyptian mythological scenes are also represented, the black ink contrasting with the white paper, giving the action the solemnity it commands.

Newer works preserve the stamp of the artist's mastery, but show a preoccupation with more mundane things, scenes from daily life replacing the more spiritual themes of the older works.

Mythology, symbolism and animal representations are still present, but instead of group compositions, the paintings have one or two characters present only: a man selling fruit in the street, a woman kneading dough with a child riding a bicycle in the background, a female figure smok-

ing on a chair.

Colours appear too. They are mostly sober ochres, olive greens, brick reds or gold, but the mixture of water colour with natural resin gives them a coppery sheen.

The characters in the paintings are real-life people we can relate to: a woman washing in a basin, a pregnant woman talking to her neighbour with a child looking on, one drawing water from a well.

A self-portrait, that of a white-bearded patriarch, is the most static of all representations.

The works are smaller in size than the earlier prints. They tax the imagination with their symbolism, at the same time exuding a feeling of peacefulness and serenity, of life as is, as we live it on daily basis.

The exhibition is on until May 8.



One of Mustafa Hallaj's earlier works on display at Baladna Art Gallery

Senate endorses metrology and specifications law

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Upper House of Parliament Thursday endorsed the metrology and specifications law after introducing some amendments.

During Thursday's session, attended by Deputy Prime Minister Ma'an Abu Nowar and several Cabinet ministers, the House debated and approved articles 7 and onward. These articles define the terms of references of the board of directors of the Metrology and Specifications Department.

The board's terms of reference include the formulation of general policy and supervising its implementation, approving standard specifications and introducing amendments, and endorsing results of lab tests. The board's duties also include the proposition of draft laws and regulations governing the work of the department and approving the department's budget and its organisation.

structure.

The law bans the importation or entry into the country or production of any commodity or item which does not conform with the standard specifications for that item. The law made it mandatory on all ministries, government departments and institutions, in addition to municipal and village councils, to observe the specifications upon floating invitation bids or tenders.

The law prohibited the use

of any measuring units other than those officially approved in Jordan. It entitles any department employee assigned by the director general to inspect any factory, store, shop or warehouse to draw samples for lab testing.

The law imposed a fine ranging between JD 500 and JD 5,000 or a prison term ranging between four and six months or both penalties on violators of the law.

MODERN MONTESSORI SCHOOL (MMS)

P.O. Box 2444 Shmeisani, Amman - Jordan
Telephone: 660504, Fax: 684905

We are pleased to announce that registration for Grades (1 to 6) is still open for the Scholastic Year 1994 - 1995. We are glad to inform you that the students will be attending their classes in the New Permanent School Campus currently under construction on an 18000 sq. m. land opposite Al Hussien Medical Centre and which will be completed by June 1994. The school has been designed to meet the highest international standards and will be operating in accordance with the Montessori Method of Education. The school will have properly equipped laboratories, library, cafeteria, gallery, indoor swimming pool, gymnasium, indoor & outdoor playgrounds.

The world today has become so fast-paced and competitive that it is more important than ever for our children to emerge as self-reliant, intelligent, motivated individuals who will fully develop their potential. Our system offers your children this opportunity.

Montessori is both a philosophy of child growth and a method for guiding such growth. It is based on the child's innate need and capacity to develop intellectual and physical abilities, and provides a carefully prepared environment designed to meet and direct these capacities. Our system of education is child centred and is based on mutual respect and cooperation. The innate creativity of the child is realized in curriculum activities from art and music, to mathematics and science.

The Modern Montessori School aims to trigger and guide your child's Social, Emotional, Intellectual, Physical, and Cultural development and prepare him ideally for life by giving him a sound mind, a balanced personality, and a healthy outlook:

"For the child is the constructor of man and so of society". (Dr. Maria Montessori)

For more information and registration, call us at the above numbers or come to our present location in Shmeisani during the following Office hours:

From 8:00 am. to 2:30 pm
From 4:00 pm. to 6:00 pm
Except Thursdays and Fridays.

Modern Montessori School and staff accredited by:

- I.M.C. - London Montessori Centre
- M.A.T.S. - Montessori Association Of Teachers & Schools
- M.A.C.T.E. - Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education

VACANCY

A newly established fruit and vegetables exporters association is seeking to fill the position of

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CANDIDATES SHOULD MEET THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS:

- 1- Jordanian Nationality (Male or Female).
- 2- Minimum education level, B.S. degree in Agri-Business. Post-Graduate degree in business administration would be a plus.
- 3- Excellent command of both Arabic and English languages.
- 4- Vision for Jordan's Future as a first class exporter of fresh agricultural products.
- 5- Demonstrate excellent planning (Budget & Activities) and communication skills (Verbal - to large and small groups - & Writing).
- 6- Private Sector experience in production and/or exports of fruit, vegetables or flowers is required.

Applicants who meet the above mentioned qualifications are kindly requested to forward their C.V. salary history along with a one - page statement in English addressing the potential future for Jordanian fresh produce exports.

All applications will be dealt with in strict confidentiality. Deadline for accepting application is Saturday May 14/94. Please send applications to the following address:

ADMINISTRATOR
P.O. BOX 9145
AMMAN - JORDAN

Arab investment firm studying new projects

KUWAIT (R) — An investment firm owned by six Gulf Arab governments said it was considering investing in between 15 and 20 new business ventures in the region.

"We've got on the drawing board between 15 and 20 projects that are promising," Gulf Investment Corporation (GIC) chief executive officer Khaled Al Fayez said in an interview.

"The public expectation is for much more, but we are not going to run our business life to meet public pressure. Either a venture is commercially viable or we will abstain," he said.

Kuwait-based GIC was set up 10 years ago by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman, to fund ventures in member countries to diversify their economies away from oil.

But most revenue so far has come from merchant banking,

investment, trade finance and treasury and capital market activities it also carries out in the region and overseas.

It has invested in 14 Gulf-based projects since it began in a wide variety of sectors ranging from aluminium, dairy and poultry, to aircraft maintenance, electronics and clothes manufacturing.

Mr. Al Fayez said the figure of 14 was "not at all disappointing. In our business if you pick five out of every 100 proposals you are doing well."

He said GIC had studied about 225 proposals from the region in the past 10 years. It had committed itself to 25, but 11 of these had become unviable for one reason or another.

Some analysts have said GIC's experience has shown that Gulf governments find it hard to rise above national interests and create Gulf-wide

economic institutions.

The analysts have said Gulf governments seem to have preferred to keep plum projects for their own nationals to invest in rather than open them to GIC, leaving it less able to fulfil its mandate to foster inter-Gulf economic links.

Mr. Al Fayez noted that Kuwait and possibly other Gulf oil producers would benefit from privatising parts of their petroleum sectors.

"I think probably with the exception of crude production you could privatise everything else — refining, transport, marketing," Mr. Al Fayez said in the interview.

"Ultimately you end up with a more efficient operation."

Many of the thinly populated but economically vital Gulf Arab oil states are planning to privatise large chunks of their state-run economies.

Kuwait is considering whether to include parts of its oil sector in its privatisation plans to win foreign investment and expertise to boost production capacity. It has ruled out selling off its crude production arm, saying this is a strategic asset.

Some Gulf states' privatisation plans are also motivated by the need to close budget deficits swollen by an 18-month-old slide in the price of oil, their main resource.

Mr. Al Fayez said his comments about Kuwaiti privatisation "in principle apply to everybody else" in the Gulf.

GIC has advised Kuwait's ministry of finance and the World Bank on the emirate's fledgling privatisation programme.

Mr. Al Fayez said Gulf states could not privatise successfully without parallel re-

forms reducing state involvement in business. These reforms had to be phased in to wean welfare societies off state support and train workers for private sector competition.

"Privatisation means reduction of the role of government in the economy in general, meaning a thorough reform of investment law, trade law, and even immigration law to reduce the role of the bureaucrat in business life. Without that important precondition you will not have achieved very much."

"You've got to have the philosophical commitment. You shouldn't do it simply to plug holes in your budget," he pointed out.

Lebanon's foreign currency reserves increase

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanon's foreign currency reserves rose by one per cent in April, continuing a steady increase since Prime Minister Rafik Hariri took office 18 months ago.

The central bank said in a statement the foreign reserves rose \$20 million last month, bringing the total to about \$2.07 billion.

When Mr. Hariri became prime minister Oct. 31, 1992, two years after the end of a devastating 15-year civil war, foreign currency reserves were estimated at \$450 million and the Lebanese lira was selling at 2,800 to the U.S. dollar. Before the conflict, the dollar sold at 3 liras.

The lira has been steadily improving as the central bank accumulated dollars to shore up the national currency. The lira is currently selling at about 1,690 to the dollar, with an almost daily improvement of about half lira.

The lira has strengthened even though the government, its coffers replenished by a sharp increase in revenue from taxation and duties, has been cutting interest rates on the Lebanese currency in an effort to encourage use of the lira instead of the dollar on the market.

The interest on Lebanese currency in local banks stands at an annual rate of between 14 and 17 per cent, down from about 20 per cent in recent months. The interest rate on the dollar is about 3.75 per cent.

The government also has ordered new bills printed in the value of 50,000 and 100,000 to further induce people into using the national currency. These bills are expected on the market this summer. The biggest bill now has a value of 10,000.

Mr. Hariri has announced a \$13 billion reconstruction and development plan when he took office. The billionaire businessman's main focus is rebuilding Beirut's war-shattered downtown commercial district, the main financial centre of the Middle East before the conflict.

The United Nations has estimated that \$25 billion is needed for Lebanon's reconstruction.

Australia to cap immigration to protect jobless

CANBERRA (R) — Australia will control immigration in an effort to help the long-term unemployed during the country's economic recovery, Immigration Minister Nick Bolakus said Friday.

Australia has sharply increased its immigration intake during previous economic recoveries since World War II to cope with skill shortages.

But Mr. Bolakus said the size of new immigration intakes would take into account Australia's 900,000 unemployed. The current unemployment rate is 10.3 per cent.

"We've targeted the fact that we do have so many unemployed and people in need of skills development," Mr. Bolakus was quoted as saying in the Australian newspaper.

"The difference between responding with massive migration now as opposed to after World War II is taking account of the nature of the work force," Mr. Bolakus said.

"We are looking at moderate increases over what is a very low base historically," he said. Essentially, you are still keeping the historically low migration programme.

Australia's planned immigration intake during the year to June 30, 1994, is 63,000, down from a high of 124,700 in 1988-89, just before the most recent recession.

"I don't think anyone's talking about the migration programme going to those high levels again," Mr. Bolakus said.

He is due to announce the target for the coming 1994-95 year in the next two weeks.

Almost a quarter of Australia's 17.7 million people were born overseas and another quarter are second-generation migrants, the legacy of hefty migration programmes in the post war years of labour-scarce recoveries.

Mr. Bolakus' comments came after the government announced a big spending package of measures to retrain the unemployed.

Prime Minister Paul Keating billed the 6.5 billion Australian dollar (\$4.6 billion) package as the fulfilment of his election promise last year to help the casualties of Australia's recession of the early 1990s, its worst since World War II.

Mr. Keating also said that retrained unemployed, not increased numbers of immigrants, would provide the extra skilled labour required to cope with economic growth and avoid inflation.

Gross domestic product grew four per cent between the December quarters of 1992 and 1993 and employment leapt 100,000 in calendar 1993.

"In this recovery the complement to skill formation is not going to come from migration," Mr. Keating said. "This time it has to come from training our own people."

Britain's queen, French president open Chunnel in symbolic pageantry

FOLKESTONE, England (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II and President Francois Mitterrand, along with the royal Rolls Royce, rode a train Friday under the English Channel after inaugurating the \$15 billion tunnel that links France and Britain.

The two heads of state, side by side in a light rain, cut a red-white-and-blue ribbon of Calais lace at the French end of the tunnel, the high point of daylong celebrations on both sides of the channel.

"We now have a land border, madame," Mr. Mitterrand told the queen. "Calais is no more than half an hour from Folkestone."

Later, the two climbed into the queen's burgundy Rolls Royce and drove slowly onto one of the new shuttle trains for the journey back to a second ceremony in Folkestone.

There, Mr. Mitterrand emotionally thanked the queen and the British people for helping liberate France during World War II.

Mr. Mitterrand, who spent part of the war in London when it was under German air attack, told the queen, "I myself can testify to the courage that city's people, the courage of your family."

The pageantry was highly

symbolic, with one of mankind's greatest engineering feats ushering in a new era in the two countries' fractious history.

Mr. Mitterrand and other speakers, though not the queen, hailed the tunnel's completion as a triumph for European unity. There was no mention of the fact that regular train service is still not running through the costly undersea passage a year after it should have opened.

The queen, who gave her speech in French, said the two nations had put their sometimes violent past behind them to create a link which mixed "French clan and British pragmatism."

"This is the first time in history that the heads of state of France and Britain have been able to meet each other without either of them having to travel by sea or air," she said. "To rejoin what nature separated some 40 million years ago has been a recurring dream of statesmen and engineers for several centuries."

The "Chunnel" will link Britain and the mainland with high-speed passenger trains between Paris, London and Brussels, and with shuttle trains piggy-backing automobiles and trucks between the French and British coasts.

Inauguration of Duty Free Shop at Kuwait Airport

Kuwait International Airport Duty Free was opened on 19th April 1994 by Water, Electricity & Communication Minister Jassem Al Aoun and Sheikh Jaber Al Mubarak the general manager of the Civil Aviation. On this occasion and while applauding the efforts of the organisers, Minister Al Aoun said the Kuwait Duty Free was of an international level and comparable with the best in the Gulf region. According to Sheikh Jaber Al Mubarak the outlets were considered as a facility of the highest standard available in an airport to serve the passengers efficiently and were the final stage in the service improvement plan of the airport. The Duty Free Shop offers a wide selection of products including jewellery, perfumes, cosmetics, fashion accessories, watches, pens, gifts, electronics etc... within a choice of various international brands. It is opened 24 hours a day with two locations in both the transit and departure lounge. It offers very competitive prices comparable to the rest of the Gulf Duty Free Shops and cheaper than the Kuwait local market.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SMACH
SUROE
STELN
RYSLIG

Answer here: _____

Yesterday's Jumble: PRIME WRATH INSIST MORGUE
Answer: What the angry field hands called their grievances — GRIPES OF WRATH

THE Daily Crossword

by Joan D. Berbrich

ACROSS
1 Powerful blow
5 Wound cover
9 Ivan, for one
13 Firmly declare
14 Nutmeg spice
15 Se or Dora
16 Tricking fig.
17 "See no
18 Propelled a boat
19 Castly work
22 Equal, prec.
23 Walt or Fleet
24 Kitchen utensil
25 Alvaro's family
29 Entry
32 Russian union
35 Evangelist
36 Chaplin's wife
38 Blessing
40 Detective Sam
41 Urdu
42 Ostrich-like birds
43 Flat-topped hill
44 Doves or Midler
45 Empty space
47 Actor's earnings
49 Robbery
51 Kind of sin
56 Overd
58 Misdad
61 Jacques' love
62 Quasi
64 Satellite
65 Kind of book
66 Quase
67 Roman poet
68 English composer
69 Sixth state
70 Stalin and Trotsky
73 Italian's capital
74 Luvit
75 Result
76 "Madam, I'm
77 Shatter
78 Coalition

DOWN
1 Lies in the sun
2 Happening
3 Madagasc
4 Instant
5 Silvery fish
6 — in (submit)
7 Ant follower?
8 — the belt (unit)
9 Juan's aunt
10 Fall (someone)
11 Pub offerings
12 Decorate snow
13 Clin's companion
14 — over (taint)
15 Alvaro's target
16 Twenty
17 Overindulge
18 Wipe out
19 Agitated state
20 Seth's brother
21 Italia's capital
24 Luvit
25 Result
26 "Madam, I'm
27 Shatter
28 Coalition
46 Part of TNT
48 Mental picture
49 Norwegian imp
52 Grapevine item
53 Treasure —
54 Stay away from
55 Gives for a time
56 Sound of laughter
57 Cupid
58 Mince
59 "Silly You — Away"
60 Shoshonien

Weekly analysis of movements and trends of major world currencies

This report is provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch-Dubai. Rates are given as of Wednesday, May 4, 1994.

Overview

Fundamental View: The dollar has come under sharp pressure in recent days, prompting concerted intervention by central banks in Europe, Japan and the U.S. Recent dollar weakness appears to reflect the negative tone in the U.S. bond market and related inflation fears, and ongoing concern about the U.S.-Japan impasse on trade issues. Although intervention has boosted the dollar a bit, it is by no means out of the woods yet, and more testing by the markets seems likely in coming weeks.

We continue to look for the dollar to move to the DM/USD 1.80 level over the next twelve months although it now looks likely that it will stay at lower levels for longer than we earlier anticipated. We also believe that the yen could move toward our 12-month target of JPY/USD 95 sooner than we expected, unless the Clinton administration is willing to back away from its aggressive push for trade concessions from Japan.

Technical View: The U.S. dollar was generally on the defensive towards the end of April. This is exemplified by the fact that each of the six major currencies that we most regularly monitor recorded month-to-month gains against the greenback. At this point, we would classify medium term sentiment for the currencies as generally only neutral; the oversold Canadian dollar is an obvious exception. The U.S. dollar index recorded a new 1994 low last week, and short term oscillators are weak (and are likely to remain so for another week or so). This, together with the break of 92.80 support implies still lower lows with support at 91.20 and 90.30.

However, the medium term downtrend in mature in the sense that it has been in effect since January and has the potential to carry through into late May or early June. Thus, anticipated further weakness will be viewed as the potential ending to the larger post-January pattern. The ability to rally back through the 93.50-94.00 range would add substance to the bottom-building argument.

Japanese yen

Fundamental View: The dollar has come under sharp selling pressure in recent trading sessions, with weakness evident not only against the yen but also against European currencies as well. Concern about the U.S.-Japan trade impasse remains high since Prime Minister Hata's newly formed minority government is in a poor position to take a leadership role regarding trade liberalisation, tax cutting, or other measures that would curb Japan's trade surplus. That raises concerns in the market that the U.S. will eventually favour further yen appreciation, despite U.S. Treasury Secretary Bentsen's recent statement that the administration sees no particular advantage in an undervalued currency.

A more general erosion of confidence in the dollar has also arisen reflecting (1) the negative tone of the U.S. bond market and related inflation concerns, (2) concerns about a perceived drift in U.S. foreign policy leadership, and (3) concerns about the changing composition of the Fed. Large-scale intervention by central banks on May 4 has boosted the dollar back toward the JPY/USD 102 level, but further testing of the central banks seems probable after Japanese traders return from their Golden Week holiday next week.

There is reason to believe that the U.S. is backing away from its policy of "benign neglect" of the dollar's value against the yen, but the markets appear set to test the administration's resolve in coming weeks. Unless the Clinton administration is willing to back away from its aggressive push for trade concessions from Japan, we believe the dollar could move toward our 12-month target of JPY/USD 95 sooner than we expected.

Technical View: The Japanese yen gained 1.0 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during April and, in the process, made a new high. Sentiment remains neutral. While the breakout did relieve some of the pressures, medium term momentum appears to be peaking; indeed, the inability to move through 98 Y/USD in the next several weeks will likely result in significant momentum deterioration.

Moreover, short term momentum is beginning to deteriorate and — at least for the immediate future — will not help alleviate

Pound sterling

Fundamental View: The British pound depreciated against the Deutschmark and U.S. dollar to DM/GBP 2.49 and U.S./GBP 1.50. Investors are wary of buying sterling ahead of local government elections on Thursday in which the ruling conservatives are expected to perform poorly. We believe that U.K. base rates have bottomed. A recent purchasing managers survey rose to a record high in April, pointing to continued recovery in manufacturing. And first quarter industrial production grew at the strongest level in five years. But we think that base rates are unlikely to be raised this year because we foresee no upward pressure on inflation in light of significant spare capacity.

Little change in U.K. short-term rates coupled with sizable German rate cuts should lead the pound up to DM/GBP 2.65 in 12 months. The pound should also be supported by a substantial yield premium over German bonds. We expect the pound to trade at U.S./GBP 1.47 in 12 months as pound appreciation against the DM is roughly offset by DM depreciation against the dollar.

Technical View: The British pound rallied 2.3 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during April. Sentiment is still neutral. Although the currency remains in its multi-month trading range, the April close of 1.52 U.S./L did break the pattern's descending upper trendline. With short term momentum viewed as being still constructive, further strength toward 1.55 is possible.

The lower end of the trading range at 1.46 U.S./L is support; a break below that would allow for at least a test of the 1993 low near 1.43 and possibly long term support at 1.40-1.42. The DM cross-rate rallied 1.2 per cent last month. Both short and medium term momentum oscillators are weak. A break below 2.485 would set the stage for a challenge of 2.43-2.44. Resistance is at 2.53-2.56.

Deutschmark

Fundamental View: Concerted dollar-buying intervention by central banks in Europe, Japan, and the U.S. has helped push the dollar back near the DM/USD 1.66 level on May 4 after the U.S. unit dipped to the DM/USD 1.64 level. But a general erosion of confidence in the dollar has arisen reflecting, among other factors, (1) the negative tone of the U.S. bond market and related inflation concerns, (2) concerns about a perceived drift in U.S. foreign policy leadership, and (3) concern about the changing composition of the Fed, and (4) concerns about the ongoing U.S.-Japan impasse on trade issues.

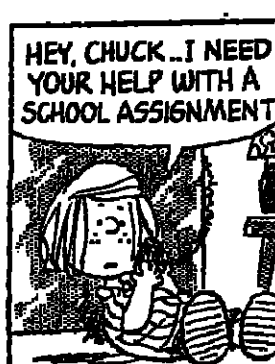
The markets may continue to test the central banks in coming weeks, but we expect that higher U.S. interest rates and lower rates in Germany will eventually bring a resumption of the trend toward a stronger dollar.

Our U.S. analysts now believe that the Federal Reserve will raise the Federal funds rate to 4.5 per cent by mid-year, while we continue to expect Germany to lower interest rates to nearly 4 per cent by early next year. We continue to look for the dollar to move to the DM/USD 1.80 level over the next twelve months although it now looks likely that it will stay at lower levels for longer than we earlier anticipated.

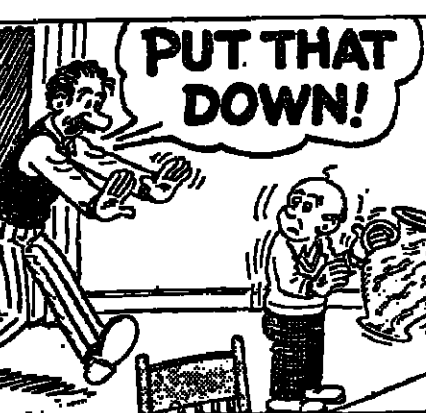
Technical View: The Deutschmark gained 1.1 per cent against the U.S. dollar last month and closed at a 1994 high. Short term momentum also made a new high for the year, confirming the price action. Sentiment is neutral. While medium term momentum still has an upward bias, the potential for a peak later in May appears reasonably good. Thus, higher highs appear likely, but the trend is maturing.

Although April's strength increases the probability of a test of last October's high at 1.59 DM/USD, there is intervening resistance at 1.63-1.64. Support has been raised to 1.675-1.695; a break of that level would allow for 1.72-1.73. The mark/yen cross-rate was up by less than 0.1 per cent last month after spending most of last week above 61. Short term momentum is constructive. This, plus the existence of a potential multi-month base pattern suggests that any further weakness in coming weeks could complete a longer term low and set the stage for an intermediate rally.

Peanuts



Mutt'n'Jeff



AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
OFFICIAL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (24/04/1994 - 04/05/1994)

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Saudi stock market set for big leap

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Saudi Arabia's stock market is set to pick up sharply as low oil prices are forcing the government to give way to the private sector after decades of state domination, experts say.

Although the Saudi market is already the busiest in the Middle East, share dealing is still smothered by high government ownership in trading institutions and restriction of share trade to national investors.

But this was offset by the speculative nature of the market, a phenomenon which is virtually absent in most exchanges in the region. Speculation has steadily pushed up turnover in Saudi Arabia over the past few years, peaking at around \$4.65 billion in 1993 compared with \$3.6 billion in 1992 and nearly \$2.26 billion in 1991.

"There is no doubt that the Saudi market will see a boom in the next years as the private sector continues to take the initiative in domestic development due to low oil prices," said Henry Azzam, chief economist at the National Commercial Bank, the biggest bank in Saudi Arabia.

"Privatisation of some public institutions will be among the strategic objectives of the 1996-2000 development plan. The private sector will have a chance to own or operate several public institutions and this is expected to boost performance and ease the financial burden on the government."

Saudi Arabia, the world top crude producer, relies heavily on oil exports and a price fall over the past decade has created a persistent deficit in its budget and forced it to restructure its economy to give a greater role to the private sector, one of the wealthiest in the world.

Bankers estimate overseas Saudi private funds at more than 100 billion dollars but there has been a trend to bring back part of them as business incentives by the government. Oil prices have languished at

between \$13-\$16 over the past year and expectations that they will remain weak have prompted Saudi Arabia to slash spending by nearly 19 per cent from \$52.5 billion in 1993 to \$42.6 billion in 1994, the lowest in five years.

"This is itself an incentive to the private sector which has previously depended heavily on government expenditure," said Zuhair Kaswani, a leading United Arab Emirates (UAE) stockbroker and economist. "The result is that the government will press ahead with privatisation and the private sector, which has resources, will set up more companies and projects, this will have a direct impact on the stock market."

Some 89 banks and companies trade their shares in Saudi Arabia, where dealing is conducted through the most sophisticated bank network in the Middle East in the absence of an official exchange.

But trading is confined to Saudis and only a fraction of the available shares are circulated. In 1993, around 60 million shares were traded, accounting for only eight per cent of the total shares, Mr. Azzam said.

Of the total, the government owns 288 million shares, or around 41 per cent while 3.8 per cent is owned by foreigners who are not allowed to trade. The remainder are held by the private sector but part of them are owned by major investors who keep their shares to maintain their influence in companies.

"When privatisation gains momentum, the market will be the first sector to feel it. But this will be done gradually so the market will not lose balance," Mr. Azzam said. "Share issue will be in line with the market's capacity."

According to Mr. Azzam, privatisation would cover electricity, communication, petrochemicals, the national airlines and other institutions. The private sector could also be allowed to run government hospitals and ports.

Trading, prices at AFM recover

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Shares prices and trading at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) took an upward swing last week, with the general price index showing a 4.1 per cent gain and turnover going up by more than 50 per cent, figures released by the AFM said.

Brokers attributed the recovery to positive signs that the Jordanian demand for an end to the interceptions of Aqaba-bound vessels was slowly being met and an awareness among investors that prices had gone too far down in the last five weeks.

The general share price index based on 60 major firms listed in AFM rose 6.3 points to close at 160.8 points when the week's trading ended Wednesday, the report said.

The index stood at 167.1 points on March 24, four days before His Majesty King Hussein said Jordan's return to peace talks with Israel was contingent on an end to the damaging inspections of all Aqaba-bound cargo by enforcers of the international sanctions against Iraq.

Washington has accepted Jordan's proposal for a land-based sanctions-verification regime, but the arrangement will not be in place for several weeks or even months. However, no ships were intercepted and delayed since the American acceptance of the proposal.

"Investors are slowly drifting back to the floor after abstaining for several weeks," said a broker, who declined to be identified in line with standing AFM guidelines. "They feel that things are getting back to normal, and that prices had indeed gone down too far for comfort."

"But trading is selective," added the broker. "Investors are zeroing in on stocks of companies which hold out promises of short term gains in the first half of the year ending June."

Turnover at the AFM for last week was JD9.4 million, a

56.7 per cent jump from the JD6 million registered last week, but still far below the JD18.2 million for the week ending March 24.

Investor mood appeared not to attach much significance to the implications for Jordan of the economic agreement signed between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) on April 28.

On the contrary, stocks of construction firms likely to get a chunk of infrastructure development in the Palestinian self-rule areas showed gains.

The AFM report said 3.3 million shares changed hands under 5,126 contracts registered during the week. Average daily trading was JD2.4 million compared with JD1.7 million last week, the lowest this year.

Industrial stock accounted for JD4.3 million, or 45.7 per cent of the week's turnover, followed by commercial banks with JD3.7 million, or 39.4 per cent, the services sector with JD1.3 million, or 13.8 per cent, and insurance stock with JD100,000, or 1.1 per cent.

Shares of 89 companies of the 114 listed in the market were traded during the week. As trading closed, 59 of them showed gains, 22 dropped and eight remained stable, the AFM report said.

Commercial bank stocks posted a gain 7.7 points in their separate index, showing an overall increase of 4.7 per cent. Stocks of the services sector showed a gain of 5.7 points, or 3.9 per cent and industrial stock gained 4.9 points or 3.5 per cent. The index for insurance stock showed a loss of one point, or 0.6 per cent.

Investors also overrode the signing on Wednesday of the Israel-PLO agreement on implementation of autonomy.

Jawad Hadid, general manager of the Arab Banking Corporation, was quoted as saying by Reuters that the market did not move "negatively or positively on this factor" despite some rises in stocks of companies with potential to get lucrative deals in the Palestinian autonomy.

Investments drop in first quarter

By Samir Shafiq

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Total investments in the first quarter of this year amounted to JD62 million, 24.4 per cent less than the JD82.1 million recorded in the first quarter of 1993.

According to statistics compiled by the Ministry of Industry and Trade, 220 companies chose industrial investments in the first quarter of 1994. However, the capital volume of these firms was only JD21.2 million, a 52.1 per cent decline from the JD44.1 million industrial investments made in the first quarter of last year when 212 companies were involved.

During January-March 1993, JD31 million were industrial investments by three public shareholding companies, JD6.9 million by 26 limited liability companies, JD4.8 million by 156 partnerships and JD1.7 million by 27 limited partnership companies.

From January-March of this year, the majority of industrial investments came from 36 limited liability companies for a total of JD11.9 million, followed by 24 limited partnerships for JD5.5 million and 160 partnership companies for JD3.9 million.

Services

The only investments by public shareholding companies during the first three months of this year came from three companies entering the services sector with a JD18.7 million capital.

A further JD6.6 million investment by 35 limited liability companies and JD3.7 million by 321 partnerships brought total investments in the services sector to JD29.1 million.

Consequently, investments in the services sector ranked first in terms of the capital as it represented 46.9 per cent of the total. In terms of the number of companies, it came in second place having acquired a 28.9 per cent of the total.

Industry, ranked second by acquiring 34.2 per cent of the total capital but, in terms of the number of companies, industrial investment was in third place at 15.8 per cent.

During the first three months of last year, industrial investment led as it represented 54.0 per cent of the total capital although, in terms of the number of companies, it ranked in third place with a 15.1 per cent standing.

Investments in services, totalling JD19.2 million, were in second place in terms of both capital volume and number of companies, representing 23.4 per cent and 28.5 per cent (403 companies) respectively.

Commercial

The commercial sector is characterised by a high number of companies but low equity volume. As such, this sector recorded the highest percentage in terms of the number of companies, having stood at approximately 52 per cent in both quarters under review.

The percentage for the first quarter of 1994 translates into 726 companies with a total investment of JD9.0 million, representing 14.5 per cent of the total capital.

For the first three months of last year, the percentage translates into 739 companies with a JD13.8 million investment representing 17.9 per cent of the total capital.

Investment in the construction sector was low at JD2.6 million compared to JD3.0 million in the first quarter of 1993, while the number of companies in both periods was about 48.

Agricultural investment stood at a negligible JD100,000 in the first quarter of 1994, compared to JD1.7 million in the January-March period of last year, for a 0.2 per cent and 2.2 per cent of the overall capital respectively.

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

Financial Markets

In co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

Freedom Metals Date: 5/5/1994

Gold 376.25 7.50 Silver 5.18 0.120

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 5/5/1994

Currency Bid Offer

U.S. Dollar 0.6970 0.6990

Swiss Franc 0.4442 0.4462

French Franc 0.1226 0.1232

Japanese Yen 0.6835 0.6860

Dutch Guilder 0.3741 0.3760

Swedish Krona 0.0433 0.0435

Italian Lira 0.0433 0.0435

Belgian Franc 0.0433 0.0435

Other Currencies Date: 5/5/1994

Currency Bid Offer

Baharaini Dinar 1.8350 1.8410

Lebanese Lira 0.040775 0.041775

Saudi Riyal 0.1855 0.1880

Qatar Riyal 0.1892 0.1901

Egyptian Pound 0.1959 0.2100

Omani Riyal 1.7910 1.8850

G.A.E. Dirham 0.1892 0.1901

Greek Drachma 0.02625 0.03125

Cypriot Pound 1.2775 1.3045

Per 100

London Exchange Rates

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs

1.3818/28 Canadian dollar

1.6692/02 Deutschmarks

1.8744/54 Dutch guilders

Fierce fighting continues in Kigali

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — After another failed attempt to gain a ceasefire, government and rebel troops exchanged heavy mortar and small arms fire in Rwanda's capital for a fourth straight day Friday.

Residents of Kigali, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front appeared to be gaining ground in a final push to capture the capital after more than a month of fighting.

Two days of peace talks ended in confusion Thursday night in the northern Tanzania town of Arusha. Radio Tanzania reported the rebels had signed a ceasefire agreement with Rwanda's interim government, but the rebels later denied it.

The rebels are from Rwanda's minority ethnic group, the Tutsis. They claim the interim government is headed by extremists from the majority Hutu ethnic group and blame it for the savage massacres that have ripped the country apart.

"There's still intensive firing," U.N. spokesman Abdul Kabia said Friday morning by telephone from Kigali. "They shelled around the Hotel Milles Colines and the Ministry of Defence, but we have not been

able to determine casualties."

More than 300 people have been sheltering for weeks at the hotel under U.N. protection, but the peacekeepers have not been able to move them to a safer location. Mr. Kabia said the United Nations was still trying to negotiate a safe passage for the hotel residents with the army high command.

Kigali's airport, its only link with the outside world, remained closed Friday. Gen. Romeo Dallaire, the U.N. force commander, shut it down Thursday after a Canadian military cargo plane was shot at shortly after landing.

The Hercules C-130 had been delivering the only aid regularly reaching the embattled city. Mr. Kabia said it still had not been determined which side in the conflict fired on the plane. There were no injuries.

"Our humanitarian efforts have been very restricted by this intense exchange of fire all over the city," Mr. Kabia said.

The Canadian plane had just taxied to a halt and crewmen were beginning to unload its cargo of biscuits and bottled water when shots were fired across the tarmac, said Mark

Doyle of the BBC, who was a passenger.

"The loadmaster shouted, 'Let's get out of here,' and the plane raced off with the rear cargo door still down," Mr. Doyle said.

The army and the rebels have been trading small-arms fire and mortar shells across the airport for days. But under an agreement worked out by the United Nations, they usually stop shooting long enough to allow relief planes to land and take off.

The Canadian plane has been making two flights a day from Nairobi to Kigali with supplies for the 450 U.N. peacekeepers still there, plus food and medicine for several thousand refugees under U.N. protection in the capital.

The U.N. peacekeeping force, reduced last month from 2,500 to under 500, is lightly armed. Its mandate does not allow it to become involved in the fighting.

The death toll in Rwanda has been variously estimated by the United Nations and aid groups at 100,000 to more than 200,000. Most of the victims have been ethnic Tutsis, slaughtered by rogue soldiers, marauding gangs of youths and

men operating under the banners of political parties led by extremist Hutus, the ethnic majority.

At least 1.3 million people have been forced to flee their homes and some 300,000 have managed to reach safety in neighbouring countries — 250,000 of them crossed the border into Tanzania in a 24-hour period last week. They are now being fed at a U.N. camp near Ngara that overnight became Tanzania's second-largest population centre after Dar Es Salaam.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said Thursday that during his visit to South Africa this weekend he would discuss Rwanda.

"I hope to meet with different government leaders from Africa to discuss ways of involving African groups to reinforce the presence of the United Nations in Kigali and Rwanda," he said in Geneva.

Congress approves bill banning assault weapons

WASHINGTON (R) — The house of representatives Thursday approved a bill banning certain assault weapons by a two-vote margin, handing President Bill Clinton and the growing gun control movement a major victory.

Clinton and senior cabinet members had lobbied intensively to win over undecided members but the outcome had remained in doubt until the vote of 216-214.

Hailing the result, Clinton said the house "rose to the occasion and stood up for the national interest." He said the 216 who voted "stood up against the madness that we have come to see when criminals and terrorists have legal access to assault weapons."

Voting for the bill were 177 Democrats, 38 Republicans and one independent as 77 Democrats and 137 Republicans voted no. The bill appeared on the brink of defeat until one member, Andrew Jacobs, an Indiana Democrat, switched his vote to yes.

The bill, which must now be reconciled with a similar senate-passed measure, bans the manufacture and sale of 19 types of rapid-fire weapons such as the AK-47, the Uzi and the TEC-9, often used by drug dealers and street gangs.

They include fast-fire rifles and handguns with high-capacity magazines. The measure exempts weapons already owned and 650 specified sporting guns.

The National Rifle Association, whose political clout and money have long been used to block gun control efforts in Congress, had pulled out all stops in fighting the bill.

Its defeat came on top of last year's congressional passage of a bill requiring a five-day waiting period for gun purchasers. That measure is now law.

Opponents of the assault weapons bill said it would infringe on the rights of law-abiding citizens while doing little to cut crime and warned members that it would herald even more restrictions for gun owners.

Armenia determined to reopen nuclear reactor

YEREVAN (R) — Armenia seems determined to ride out Western criticism and reopen a controversial nuclear power station with Russian help to surmount an energy crisis that has brought the economy to its knees.

The Metamor power plant about 25 kilometres outside the Armenian capital was closed in 1989 when Armenia was still part of the Soviet Union, after an earthquake devastated the north of the Transcaucasian state killing 25,000 people.

The plant was not damaged even though the epicentre of the tremor was only 120 kilometres to the north. But the West says there are inbuilt design problems with its two Soviet-made reactors that make reopening risky.

Armenia, starved of energy mainly because of the war with its oil-rich neighbour Azerbaijan, says it is imperative that it reopens the Metamor plant near the border with Turkey to get its economy restarted.

"The peculiar needs of Armenia leave it with no other choice," said Steve Tashjian, energy and fuel minister, in an interview Thursday.

The present target date of reopening is around spring next year. Leading industrialised countries in the Group of Seven (G-7) and the European Union have made it clear that, although they may sympathise with Armenia's plight, they are against recommissioning the plant. They say its safety standards will always be in doubt.

"We believe there are inherent problems with the design of the Metamor plant, particularly the lack of a containment shell," a spokesman for the U.S. embassy in Yerevan said.

Khmer Rouge claim major victories in northwest

PHNOM PENH (R) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas Friday claimed major victories in Cambodia's far northwest but government officials denied the reports and said royal forces were preparing to launch a clean-up offensive in the area.

A Reuters news team in the area confirmed government forces held the two key highways crisscrossing the region but added the situation was fragile, with guerrillas digging in within 50 metres of the roads. Fighting has made sections impassable, they said.

"They control it but it's not safe," said one returning reporter, adding the situation was changing hour to hour.

In Phnom Penh Friday the Khmer Rouge said they controlled a key 30-kilometre stretch of Route Five going east into the interior from Poipet, Cambodia's gateway to Thailand.

The faction said in a statement that guerrillas had wiped out government forces all the way to the next big population centre, Sisophon. 45 kilometres east of Poipet, killing 157 soldiers and wounding many more. It did not detail

guerrilla casualties. "We caught 62 soldiers and we educated them to stop fighting and become regular people," the statement said.

The Reuters team who visited Poipet Thursday said the usually bustling border town was nearly deserted, with many shops, homes and hotels locked or boarded up.

Government spokesman Sieng La Presse said the government still held Route Five and half of Route 10.

The two highways intersect at Battambang, Cambodia's second largest city. Earlier this week, a guerrilla force came within 20 kilometres of Battambang before it was pushed back by government troops.

"We do have a plan for mopping up the insurgents... Hopefully in the next few days you will see a movement of royal forces," Mr. La Presse said, declining to give more details.

Fighting between the Cambodian royal army and the Maoist guerrilla faction has increased dramatically in recent weeks after the insurgents recaptured their headquarters in Pailin, in the country's north-

Unbowed by local poll rout, Major pledges to fight on

LONDON (R) — John Major vowed Friday to fight on as Britain's prime minister after his Conservatives suffered an unprecedented defeat in local elections, raising the prospect of a party leadership battle.

Major, who blamed the sweeping losses on economic recession and voters' dismay over party squabbling, told reporters that he would not give up without a fight.

"If anybody chooses to engage in that fight, they will find me standing there waiting for them," Mr. Major said.

In a verdict on two years of policy U-turns since the last general election, the Conservatives won just 27 per cent of the vote in Thursday's local council elections, the lowest share this century in a nationwide election.

The main opposition Labour Party, out of power nationally since 1979, consolidated the gains it made at the last local elections in 1990 by capturing 41 per cent of the vote.

The Conservatives were pushed into a humiliating third place by the centrist Liberal Democrats, who received 28 per cent.

If the figures were repeated in a general election, Labour would have a majority of 125 in the 651-seat parliament. "This is not just a shock."

This is a body blow to the Major government," Labour leader John Smith said. "In every part of the country they've been rejected and rejected in some style."

Although senior Conservatives tried to portray the defeat as a mid-term protest vote, they said Mr. Major needed to reassert his authority over his divided and demoralised party or run the risk of a leadership challenge in the months ahead.

Maverick Conservative MP John Carlisle said Mr. Major's position was now "almost untenable" and he would stand against the prime minister in the autumn if no one else came forward.

"It is critically important that this result is looked at very closely and he must look at his own position," he said.

Sir Marcus Fox, chairman of the influential 1922 Committee of Backbench Conservative MPs, said dissidents like Carlisle should shut up. The party needed to close ranks if it wanted to survive.

He said Mr. Major had to take the lead by shaking up his cabinet, which he said had failed to give the political direction sought by grassroots Conservatives.

"There will have to be a reshuffle," Mr. Fox said. "What we have to do is to

show that we now are positively setting out to succeed and to stop all this bickering."

With results from most of the 5,000 council seats in, the Conservatives had suffered net losses of more than 400. They lost control of 17 councils and kept control in 13.

Labour made deep inroads into strongholds of middle-class Conservative support such as Croydon in south London, held by the Conservatives for 100 years, and Basildon in Essex, a symbol of Mr. Major's success at the last general election.

Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown trumpeted his party's success in gaining 350 seats and taking control of 10 councils.

"This is the end of four years of solid successes that add together to show the strong upward curve of the party," he said.

It was the Conservatives' worst electoral performance since 1945. The party suffered a rout in Scotland, did badly in the north of England and failed to capture the central city of Birmingham, their main target outside London.

In the capital, the Conservatives lost six boroughs, a crumb of comfort was their retention of the flagship Wandsworth council.

Bangladesh calls in army to help storm survivors

DHAKA (R) — Bangladeshi troops moved Friday to help survivors of the storm that killed at least 170 people and left thousands injured, but officials said relief efforts were hampered by inadequate supplies.

Troops have been deployed to help rebuild homes but a lack of construction materials, including corrugated roof sheets, delayed such efforts, said one official at Cox's Bazar, one of the areas battered by Monday's storm.

The storm, with winds of 200 kilometres per hour, devastated vast areas along the coast and several islands in the Bay of Bengal.

Officials estimate about half

a million people have been made homeless. Hundreds are still missing, including hundreds of Thai fishermen caught in the storm.

Officials say some of those still missing on land may be dead but most are likely to have been displaced from their homes by the storm.

The majority of the dead were Burmese Rohingya refugees living in 18 camps between Cox's Bazar and Teknaf, 90 kilometres away on the coast.

The government, aid agencies and foreign diplomats said they were "relieved" by the minimum loss of life.

"Bangladesh substantially mitigated the cyclone's impact

by mobilising governmental and non-governmental organisations before the storm arrived and by evacuating hundreds of thousands of people to safer areas before its landfall," said the U.S. ambassador, David Merrill.

In an interview published in newspapers Friday, Mr. Merrill said that "some 100 to 200 people were killed in the cyclone on Monday, which is far less than in 1991 when the country's worst storm claimed 138,000 lives."

The U.S. government has sent a disaster management expert to Cox's Bazar to help the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, Mr. Merrill said without giving details.

Despite retraction, Nagano's remarks cause fury in Asia and at home

TOKYO (AFP) — Despite Japanese Justice Minister Shigeto Nagano's retraction Friday of remarks he made denying the Nanjing massacre, the incident has refreshed memories of Japan's militaristic past and hurt its image among Asian neighbours.

"What I said was inappropriate. I want to withdraw them," the former army general told a news conference.

Nagano, 71, said he would not step down for the time being but would wait for instructions from Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata, who personally reprimanded the justice minister and who is scheduled to return from a European tour Saturday.

Nagano said in an interview published earlier this week that he believed the Nanjing massacre was a "fabrication" that it was "wrong" to say the Pacific War was waged with the aim of aggression.

The remarks immediately

sparked angry reactions in many countries in the region, including China, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam and Australia.

Nagano said the Nanjing massacre, in which up to 300,000 Chinese lost their lives following Japan's invasion in 1937, was an "unfortunate incident" using the standard euphemism for the massacre found in Japanese school textbooks.

Nagano's remarks raised doubts among Japan's neighbours about the sincerity of Tokyo's recent apology for atrocities committed by the Imperial army before and during World War II.

Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) sided with its long-time foes in the Japan Communist Party (JCP) Friday, to denounce Justice Minister Shigeto Nagano's assertion that the Nanjing massacre was a hoax.

But while the LDP described

the remarks as "careless" the conservative opposition party fell short of calling for Nagano's resignation, as demanded by the JCP. The Social Democratic Party, which stormed out of the coalition last week, said earlier that the government should "reconsider" Nagano's status.

The remarks of the justice minister, which drew criticism from other countries, are careless," LDP Secretary General Yoshiro Mori told reporters.

"As an incumbent cabinet minister, he should have been prudent."

Kazuo Shii, head of the JCP secretariat, meanwhile, called on Nagano to be dismissed for his "attempt to completely justify historic crimes, using the same terminology as the Tennoist (Emperor) government and the military."

The entire incident demonstrates the great difficulty Japan has had turning a troubling page in its history.

'We're still in love', say Gere, Crawford in Times advert

LONDON (AFP) — Hollywood's "golden couple" — film star Richard Gere and supermodel Cindy Crawford — took out a full-page advertisement in the Times Friday to counter press speculation over their marriage.

"We got married because we love each other and we decided to make a life together. We are heterosexual and monogamous and take our commitment to each other very seriously... We remain very married," the couple said in an advertisement estimated to have cost more than £20,000 (\$30,000).

Gere and Crawford said they feel "quite foolish" in responding to rumours which they said stemmed from a "French tabloid," but they wished "to correct the falsehoods and rumours and hope it will alleviate the concerns of our friends and fans." In the advertisement headed "A Personal Statement by Richard Gere and Cindy Crawford" the pair, known as Hollywood's "golden couple," stated they were looking forward to starting a family and stressed Gere's career in films will not be abandoned. The public statement followed months of speculation by gossip columnists that they were about to divorce.

"This is the end of four years of solid successes that add together to show the strong upward curve of the party," he said.

It was the Conservatives' worst electoral performance since 1945. The party suffered a rout in Scotland, did badly in the north of England and failed to capture the central city of Birmingham, their main target outside London.

In the capital, the Conservatives lost six boroughs, a crumb of comfort was their retention of the flagship Wandsworth council.

Museum buys 15 Warhols, becomes second-largest collection

BALTIMORE, Maryland (AFP) — The Baltimore Museum of Art will add 15 Andy Warhol paintings and three drawings to its collection, making it the second-largest museum collection of Warhol's art in the world. The museum paid over \$1 million for the works and will add them to 23 other pieces it has. Warhol made his mark with "pop art," a modern form fusing images of commonplace items such as dollar bills with brilliant colour. He also applied the same technique to celebrity portraits. The works span from 1975 to 1986. Warhol died in 1987 from surgical complications. The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, where the artist was born in 1928, will have the largest collection when it opens May 16.

HEBER SPRINGS, Ark. (AP) — Mrs. Carter drowned, Mr. Carter said. The next Mrs. Carter shot herself, he said. When the latest Mrs. Carter also turned up dead, some folks suspected 68-year-old ethridge Carter was not just unlucky in love. Police now say they will investigate all three deaths in light of what happened to Shirley Carter, who died Saturday of a gunshot to the head. Her husband insists she, too, committed suicide. Dave Wisdom Harrod, Carter's attorney, called the deaths "an unfortunate, bad string of circumstances." "Striking, sure, but not proof a wife killer is living in this retirement town 80 kilometres north of Little Rock. "We live in a small town, and if lightning were to strike the same tree three times, it would be the talk of the town," Harrod said.

"That doesn't mean it would have been an unnatural event. That does happen." Police had wanted to charge Carter in the 1992 death in Linda Carter, dead wife No. 2. The prosecutor would not go for it, citing a lack of evidence. Chief Fred Byford conceded Thursday authorities do not have a possible motive, nor did any of the late Mrs. Carters have a large life insurance policy. Carter never said why dead wife No. 2 or No. 3 might have been despondent. Mr. Byford said. A curious fact about the newly deceased Mrs. Carter: Sixteen months ago, she insisted Linda Carter would not have killed herself. That was when she was still Shirley Matthews. Linda was her best friend. Shirley fell in love with Carter, who goes by the name Bill, while consoling him over Linda's death. They married in 1993. "Bill convinced her she had nothing to do with it," said Gloria Lawson, a family friend. "We all tried to warn her not to marry him, but she was such a loving and very vulnerable person. All she wanted was to be loved. When he came along, he allowed her to reenter the mainstream, as a married woman." The very first Mrs. Carter now lives in another town, Mr. Byford said. He doesn't know her name. They came Louise Carter, who drowned in Greens Ferry Lake at age 63 in 1990 while fishing with her husband on the couple's 6-metre party barge.

NEWS IN BRIEF

2 U.S. jets collide off S. Korea

SEOUL (R) — Two U.S. Air Force fighters crashed into sea off South Korea's west coast after colliding in the air Friday, a U.S. military spokesman said. He said an F-16 from the 9th fighter wing at Kunsan Airbase in South Korea collided with an F-15 assigned to Kadena Airbase in Japan during a training mission. "One pilot was picked up, and a rescue team is searching for the other pilot," he said. He said the air force was investigating the cause of the collision.

14 killed as Indian train hits jeep

NEW DELHI (R) — Up to 14 people were killed when a train ploughed into a jeep on a level crossing in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, domestic news agencies said Friday. They said the people in the jeep were returning from a marriage function Thursday when they were hit on an unmanned crossing near Mahabubnagar, 80 kilometres southwest of the state capital Hyderabad. Up to 35 people were killed in a similar crash in Andhra Pradesh Monday, when a train slammed into a tractor and trailer carrying a wedding party.

MP admits killing gangster

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian member of parliament Sergei Skoroshkin admitted killing a gangster who had been extorting money from him, in an interview in Friday's Moscow Times. He said a gang which last year forced him to hand over 30 million roubles (\$16,000) by threatening to kill him accosted him again last Sunday near his home in Zaraysk 160 kilometres from Moscow. He snatched a Kalashnikov assault rifle from one of the gang and shot dead another gangster who opened fire. Mr. Skoroshkin told the paper in a telephone interview. An unidentified woman was killed in the shooting by one of the gang. Mr. Skoroshkin, 33, who ran a food distribution company before his election in December, said he had immediately informed the police about the killing and was now at home "protected by friends."

Kremlin denies claims of invalid referendum

MOSCOW (AFP) — kremlin chief of staff Sergei Filatov dismissed Friday an opposition-mounted "provocation" findings by a panel of experts claiming that last December's referendum on the constitution was not valid. Mr. Filatov, quoted by ITAR-TASS, said the findings showing that voter turnout did not reach the 50-per cent mark required to validate the referendum "smelled of a major provocation." The findings were compiled by the head of a presidential commission, Alexander Sobyannin, who said that 46.1 per cent of voters turned out in the referendum and not 54.8 per cent as claimed by the central electoral commission. Mr. Filatov said that the commission "had nothing to do with the presidential administration" and that the methods used by the panel raised "serious doubts" as to their credibility.



A captured Khmer Rouge soldier squats in front of two government soldiers May 5, near the abandoned village of Sdno some 27km west of Battambang as scattered fighting continues in this northwest province. Another captured Khmer Rouge soldier was shot trying to escape and beleaguered by army soldiers (AFP photo)

Kentucky Derby kicks off today

Derby matches Holy Bull and Brocco

LOUISVILLE (R) — Sixteen years ago, in 1978, three brilliant battles between Affirmed and Alydar presented what was probably the finest six weeks in American horse racing history. Affirmed won each Triple Crown race with Alydar second every time.

Saturday's 120th running of the Kentucky Derby, the first Triple Crown race of the spring, takes place in a different climate, in an era where racing attendance is down and unhappiness rampant over drugs, fixed racing and a lack of stars.

Even so, this race has a real rivalry. It's East Coast versus Hollywood, speed versus stealth, low breeding versus a regal bloodline.

Of course, there are other entrants besides rivals Holy Bull and Brocco in this year's \$500,000 added, Grade 1 race, but all the talk around Churchill Downs this week has been about the rivalry.

Holy Bull is the gritty front-runner trained and owned by Jimmy Croll, a 74-year-old horseman who has never won a Derby. Brocco is the professional race owned by Albert Broccoli, the producer of 16 James Bond movies.

Holy Bull has won six of seven races, grabbing the lead off the mark in all but two starts, pulling away from classy fields in five of them. Brocco is four of six, a stalker who likes to hide in the pack and let the leader set the pace, then strike in the final furlong of the stretch.

Holy Bull lacks pedigree, with a seventh place by Grey Dawn in the 1975 Derby being the best showing by a relative. Brocco is related to three previous winners — Proud Clarion in 1965, Sunny's Halo in 1983 and Sunday Silence in 1989.

The other contenders have a chance. Anything can happen

in a horse race and the handlers of such horses as Valiant Nature, Strodes Creek, Tabasco Cat, and Go For Gin did not come to Louisville just to enjoy the warm spring sunshine.

But when Churchill Downs set the odds at 8-5 on Holy Bull and 3-1 on Brocco, it was reflecting the development of these two game three-year-olds who have marched towards his meeting like the civil war generals Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant.

Brocco is trying to become the first horse ever to win the Breeder's Cup juvenile as a two-year-old and come back to win the Kentucky Derby the next spring. He ran away from the field last November at Santa Anita, winning the juvenile by eight lengths.

Croll did not enter Holy Bull in the Breeder's Cup, waiting instead for the Triple Crown classics this spring. He thinks his horse is ready, despite a tough workout at Churchill Downs Monday that left the horse sore and gasping for air.

"That workout did him good," Croll said, reflecting the old-school toughness that once led him to send Holy Bull on all-out workout the day before a race, which the horse won. "He came back to the barn and ate every oat, that's what's important."

Brocco's trainer, Randy Winick, a 45-year-old born just two years before Croll scored his first stakes victory, is a different kind of trainer. He likes to frequent late-night Blues bars and has worked Brocco slowly, racing him sparingly, waiting to strike.

Brocco starts from the number 10 spot and Holy Bull at number 4, post positions both camps see as advantageous — Brocco because he wants to wait to make his move, Holy Bull because he wants to burst to the front.

Holy Bull draws No. 4 post position

LOUISVILLE (AP) — Holy Bull drew the No. 4 post position and was made the 8-5 early favourite for Saturday's Kentucky Derby as a field of 15 was entered Thursday for the first leg of the U.S. thoroughbred Triple Crown.

Track oddsmaker Mike Battaglia made Santa Anita Derby winner Brocco the second choice at 3-1, while the next choice was Tabasco Cat, trained by D. Wayne Lukas, at 6-1.

The field, in post position order, with odds and jockeys: Soul of the Matter; 20-1, Kent Desormeaux; Valiant Nature; 12-1, Laffit Pincay, Powis Castle; 30-1, Chris Antley; Holy Bull; 8-5, Mike Smith; Ulises; 30-1, Jorge Chavez; Mahogany Hall; 30-1, Gary Stevens; Smilin' Singin' Sam 37-1, Larry Melancon; Southern Rhythm; 15-1, Garrett Gomez; Blum Affair; 15-1, Jerry Bailey; Meadow Flight; 30-1, Shane Sellers, and Kandaily; 30-1, Craig Perret.

Post time is 5:30 p.m. (2130 GMT), and all starters will carry 126 pounds (57 kilograms). If all 15 go to post, the total purse will be \$888,800 with \$638,800 going to the winner.

Looking for a rabbit to stop favourite

LOUISVILLE (AP) — It will probably take about two-thirds of Saturday's Kentucky Derby to show whether Holy Bull will live up to his status as 8-5 favourite.

"If Holy Bull goes the half (mile) in 46 seconds and change, even 47, he'll be spending himself and we'll have a chance to run him down in the stretch," said Valiant Nature's trainer Ron McAnally. "If he goes slower, he'll have enough left to go wire to wire."

Holy Bull won his last two races wire-to-wire. Randy Winick, trainer of Brocco, said he also expected to be checking the time at the half-mile mark of the 1.25 mile race to see if the cannonball colt could be caught.

"If they run half a mile faster than 46 and four-fifths, then we'd have a good shot at catching him," Winick said. "But if the pace is slower, he'll keep rolling."

What remained to be seen was who would take on the task of pushing Holy Bull early.

"We're not going to go after him," McAnally said. "If we did, it would set it up for Brocco or Strodes Creek."

McAnally said three possible candidates for the job were Go

For Gin, Panamanian import Ulises and Smilin' Singin' Sam, trained by Irishman Niall O'Callaghan.

Smilin' Singin' Sam won his last start wire-to-wire, but owner Col Campbell said the colt would not necessarily be pushing for the early lead.

"There is that question of who will go with Holy Bull," Campbell said. "Our horse can be on the lead, but he can also be back. I think that Brocco, with his tactical speed, has to be there."

Campbell said post position would have a lot to do with it. "We certainly don't want to drop too far out," Campbell said. "If we could make an easy lead, which is probably a ridiculous thing to expect, we'll take it. But if Holy Bull wants the lead, we don't have to take it."

"Smilin' Singin' Sam can be rated, and we want to be around at the finish."

Holy Bull would become the fourth grey in history to win the Kentucky Derby, after Decidedly in 1962, Spectacular Bid in 1979 and Gato Del Sol in 1982.

There have been 21 wire-to-wire winners in the 119 derbies to date, the last one the filly winning Colours in 1988.



Didier Auriol steers his Toyota Celica Thursday during the first leg of the 38th edition of the Corsica auto rally (AFP photo)

Auriol leaves rivals helpless in Tour of Corsica rally

AJACCIO, Corsica (R) — Frenchman Didier Auriol left his rivals helpless as he powered his Toyota to a clean sweep on the opening day of the Tour of Corsica Thursday.

Auriol, seeking his fifth victory in the World Championship rally, was fastest in all of the first eight timed stages across the Mediterranean island from Ajaccio to Bastia.

Just as impressive on the damp roads along the southern coastline in the morning as on the dry, mountain roads towards the northern port of Bastia in the afternoon, Auriol built a commanding 35-second lead over former world champion Carlos Sainz.

The Spaniard, who won in 1991, was the only one to resist Auriol. He made progress in every stage in the promising new Subaru.

Scotsman Colin McRae was forced out early, driving the other Subaru. McRae kept in touch in the first stages and was third when he skidded wide and hit a rock in the day's fourth timed section between Aullene and Zicavo.

Despite a puncture, McRae went on, only to spin later in the stage, damaging the steering of his car. The mechanics failed to repair the Subaru in time for him to take the start of the next stage and he had to withdraw.

There was bitter disappointment also for world champion Juha Kankkunen, making his first appearance in Corsica since 1989.

The veteran Finn, who prefers icy terrain and loose gravel to tarmac, finished the day in fourth place one minute and 14 seconds behind his

Toyota teammate.

Kankkunen, who said he would love to win in Corsica one day, was 28 seconds behind fearless Italian Andrea Aghini, third in a privately-entered Toyota.

Sainz's only option is to attack during the second stage in the northern part of the island from Bastia to Calvi. But the Spaniard did not sound confident.

"The car is getting better on tarmac and everything went well," he said. "The problem is that Auriol is ahead of us all the time because he knows all the roads by heart. I'll give it all I have but honestly, I just can't go any faster."

Far more cautious in his statement than in his driving, Auriol said the race was not over yet. "Sainz is not to be taken lightly and you never know what can happen," he said.

Three spectators injured

AJACCIO (R) — Three spectators were injured after being hit by a car in Tur of Corsica rally Friday, organisers said.

Italian Gianfranco Conico, driving a Ford Escort, skidded wide in the day's second timed stage from St. Andria di U Cotonie to Runitorio, and went into spectators.

The rally was halted and the spectators were taken to a nearby hospital, organisers said without elaborating.

Doctors deny Senna died at Imola Track

BOLOGNA, Italy (Agencies) — Doctors who treated Ayrton Senna after his crash during the San Marino Grand Prix denied that the Brazilian driver died at the Imola Track.

Senna's brother Edoardo and some news reports suggested Senna died at the scene, and that the fact may have been covered up to avoid the summoning of a coroner and an immediate investigation. Such an act would have caused the race's cancellation.

Grand prix organisers must pay heavy penalties to commercial sponsors and television networks if a race is not staged on schedule.

Senna, a three-time Formula One champion, was pronounced dead at 6:40 p.m. Sunday at Maggiore Hospital in Bologna, about four hours after his Williams Renault failed to negotiate the left turn at the Tamborello curve at the Dino and Enzo Ferrari autodrome and crashed head-on into a concrete wall about 300 kph (180 mph).

In a statement, hospital director Giuseppe Guerra said medical reports "unequivocally show that Senna died at 6:40 p.m. Sunday when his heart stopped beating."

"Speculations about the truthfulness of what was reported by the doctors is injurious to their professionalism," Guerra said.

Guerra stressed that dozens of doctors, nurses and technicians attempted to save Senna's life after he was flown by helicopter from the newby track to the intensive care unit.

Senna, one of the most popular and successful Formula One drivers, suffered massive head injuries in the crash on one of the circuit's fastest tracks.

Initial autopsy reports stated that the Brazilian driver died from "multiple trauma with heart failure."

Bologna doctors also stated that Austrian rookie Roland Ratzenberger, who suffered fatal injuries in a similar crash in Saturday's qualifying, also died at Maggiore, eight minutes after his arrival.

In Sao Paulo Thursday, Formula One world champion Alain Prost of France paid an emotional tribute to his dead race track "enemy", Ayrton Senna, saying his career would never be the same again without the Brazilian.

"We were enemies, but we were also very close," Prost told reporters after acting as pallbearer at the funeral in Sao Paulo of Senna.

Navratilova wins in Rome

ROME (AP) — She was not quite on the ropes, but No. 2 seed Martina Navratilova had to step up her game to defeat an Argentine clay court specialist in three sets Thursday to reach the quarterfinals of the Italian Open.

"I finally won in three sets on clay," the 37-year-old American exclaimed after her 6-2, 3-6, 6-4 victory over Ines Gorrochategui in 1 hour 41 minutes.

Navratilova, who is retiring from singles competition at the end of the year, saw the match slipping away against an opponent who had beaten her on clay at Hilton head five weeks ago.

She was up 5-2 in the third set but the Argentine climbed back, bolstered by a shot that kissed the baseline as Navratilova sought to put the match away.

"If I had lost I would have been drinking a lot of Pinot Grigio (wine) tonight," said Navratilova.

Top seed Conchita Martinez of Spain breezed into the quarterfinals with a 6-1, 6-1 rout of Argentina's Patricia Tarabini. Italian qualifier Adriana Serra-Zanetti ousted another

seed, No. 10 Brenda Schultz.

The diminutive Italian, who eliminated No. 4 Anke Huber after losing the first set, had an easier time against her Dutch opponent, who at 6-foot-2 (1.88 metres) is a foot (30 centimetres) taller.

"I was very calm once on the court and I knew I was going to win," said the 18-year-old Italian, ranked 197th in the world.

Schultz was the eighth seed eliminated by a low-ranking opponent.

No. 7 Naoko Sawamatsu of Japan eliminated No. 13 Ann Grossman of the United States 6-3, 6-3. No. 8 Nathalie Tauziat of France ousted Italy's unseeded Sandra Cecchini 6-4, 6-2.

Irina Spirlea of Romania, who eliminated No. 3 Gabriela Sabatini in the tournament's biggest upset, advanced by beating Joannette Kruger of South Africa 4-6, 6-3, 6-1. No. 9 seed Judith Wiesne of Austria ousted Radka Rubakova of Slovakia 3-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Navratilova, who will face Sawamatsu in the quarters, said she was bothered by the cold and wind gusts after three days of warm sunshine at the Foro Italico.

Stich gets angry in time

HAMBURG, Germany (AP) — Top seed Michael Stich survived a tremendous battle with Carlos Costa to reach the German Open semi-finals here Friday.

Costa saved two match points before Stich, fired up by a disputed line call, won the Spaniard's serve for a 6-4, 6-7, 6-4 triumph and now plays Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov who beat him last month in the Monte Carlo Open.

Stich served for the match in the second and third sets. The Spaniard forced the second

into a tie-break he won 7-3 but could not repeat the trick in the third set.

A fifth double fault and disputed line call forced Stich against the wall and gave Costa the chance to serve for 5-5 but the German bounced back.

Both men played some marvellous tennis and Stich, especially, mixed aggression with some superb touch play.

However, he made twice as many unforced errors and Costa was able to claw his way back from 5-2 down in the final set to set up a nerve-jangling finish.

Jockey dies after accident

LONDON (R) — British jockey Steve Wood died Friday after an accident at Lingfield Park race track, clerk of the course Geoff Stickels said. Wood had been taken to hospital with suspected broken ribs and lung problems. Two other jockeys were involved in the accident but they were not thought to be hurt.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA MURPHY
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USE YOUR WINNERS WISELY

Both vulnerable. North deals.			
NORTH			
♠ Q 10 9			
♥ K 10 5 3			
♦ K Q 10 9			
♣ J 2			
WEST			
♠ 8 7			
♥ 6			
♦ 8 7 6 5 2			
♣ K Q 10 6			
EAST			
♠ 5 4 3 2			
♥ 9 4 2			
♦ A			
♣ A 8 7 4 3			
SOUTH			
♠ A K 6			
♥ A Q J 8 7			
♦ J 4 3			
♣ 9 6			

The bidding: North East South West
Pass Pass 1 Pass
3 Pass
Pass Pass
Opening lead: King of ♠
We've often published hands where counting can be the secret to landing the contract. It works equally well for the defense and will often guide defenders to how to defeat the contract.

North's jump to three hearts as a passed hand showed four-card support and a hand just short of an opening bid. It invited South to go

to game with anything but a dead minimum and South had enough to oblige.

West led the king of clubs. East encouraged with the eight. West continued the suit, but after taking two clubs and a diamond the defense ran out of steam.

Had East spent a moment counting the hand the winning defense would have been obvious. West's lead was surely from the king-queen and taking those five points and adding eight for the two aces in hand would mean that East could not count for more than an extra jack or two from partner. The only real hope of defeating the contract, therefore, lay in scoring a diamond ruff.

That could be accomplished easily enough. East should have overtaken partner's king of clubs with the ace, cashed the ace of diamonds and then returned a club to West's marked queen. It would take a rather dense defender not to realize that East had a singleton diamond and a return of that suit would have allowed East to score the setting trick with a ruff.

Jazz eliminate Spurs; Atlanta, Denver forced fifth games

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah (R) — Karl Malone scored 34 points, including a crushing 22-foot jumper with 42 seconds remaining, as the Utah Jazz knocked the San Antonio Spurs out of the playoffs with a 95-90 triumph Thursday.

In other games, the Denver Nuggets, seeded last in the west, scored a 94-85 overtime win over the NBA-best Seattle SuperSonics to force a fifth and deciding game and the Atlanta Hawks, top seed in the east, staged off elimination and forced a fifth game by beating the bottom-seeded Miami Heat 103-89.

John Stockton added 13 points and 18 assists for Utah,

which will next face the winner of the Denver-Seattle series. Stockton had 11 assists in the fourth quarter for the Jazz, who won the first-round playoff series three games to one and avoided a trip back to San Antonio.

"We wanted to win it here," said Stockton. "That was our best chance and our guys really stepped it up in the last quarter."

The Jazz won it in the fourth quarter by turning up the defence and calling Malone's number over and over on offense. "The Mailman" applied the crusher by hitting a rare 3-pointer with 42 seconds to go.

In Denver, Laphonso Ellis scored six of his 27 points in overtime to lift the Nuggets to another surprising win over the SuperSonics in game four of their western conference playoff series.

Bryant Stith also scored six points in overtime as Denver outscored the SuperSonics 12-3 in the extra session.

Robert Pack sent the game into overtime with a 3-pointer with 27 seconds left in the fourth quarter for an 82-82 tie.

Detlef Schrempf and Gary Payton scored 20 points apiece to lead the Sonics, who finished the regular season

with the best record in the NBA and the best in franchise history at 63-19.

The Nuggets had two chances to win in regulation. Pack made a clean steal on Garym Payton off the inbounds pass after hitting the game-tying shot, but he missed badly from 16 feet out after losing the handle on a breakaway. Reggie Williams then intercepted the inbounds pass, but missed a 14-foot baseline jumper at the buzzer.

Ellis, who also grabbed 17 rebounds, scored the first basket of overtime on a 17-footer with 2:55 left and the Nuggets never relinquished the lead.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

AOHR elected administrative committee

AMMAN (J.T.) — The general assembly of the Amman branch of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR) Friday elected a 10-person administrative body for a one-year term. The 10 are: Amin Shuqair, Hani Al Dahleh, Labib Kabbani, Asma Khader, Abdul Jaber Abu Gharbieh, Omar Abdul Rabe, Rajai Nafa'a, Salem Nahas, Walid Maraqa, and Fakhri Belbeisi.

Arafat agrees to drop 'president'

CAIRO (AFP) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat has agreed to drop the title "president of Palestine" when he enters the self-rule regions of Jericho and Gaza Strip. According to a letter annexed to the Cairo accord on the launch of self-rule signed Wednesday, he will use the title "chairman (raees in Arabic) of the Palestinian Authority" to run Gaza and Jericho. The Palestinians have referred to Mr. Arafat as president of Palestine since a session of their parliament-in-exile in Algiers in 1988. But the letter allows the PLO chairman to use the Arabic title "raees" which also means president. Also in the letter from Mr. Arafat addressed to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, a co-signatory of the accord, the PLO agrees to inform the Israeli government of the names of the Palestinian Authority. "In Israel, the head of the government press office Uri Dromi on Thursday quoted Mr. Rabin as telling Mr. Arafat in Cairo to stop globe-trotting and 'get prepared for serious things.'"

Four corridors to link Gaza and Jericho

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) have agreed on four land corridors across the Jewish state to link the Palestinian self-rule regions of Gaza and Jericho, an Israeli spokesman said Thursday. Colonel Ami Gluska, spokesman for the team negotiating with the PLO, said the "four protected passages" were existing Israeli roads. At least one of the corridors would be open to all residents of Gaza and the West Bank town, even if they had no permit to enter Israel. "If there are no major security problems, they will remain open," he told a press conference here. "Otherwise, only one will be available to the Palestinians." As for Palestinian leaders, the two sides have agreed they can use two helicopters and four light planes "registered in Israel or a country which has air links with Israel," Mr. Gluska said. All four of the land routes, starting from the Erez crossing in northern Gaza and passing through the southern Israeli town of Ashkelon, will avoid Jerusalem. They will be closed at night, as well as on three Israeli holidays. Palestinian motorists will carry cards on which the time of entry and departure from Israeli territory will be marked.

Italian bank fined for violating boycott rules

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Atlanta branch of a large Italian state bank has agreed to a \$475,000 fine for providing to Iraqi banks information about certain companies' trade relations with Israel, the government said Thursday. The Atlanta agency of Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL) agreed to the civil penalty without admitting or denying the alleged violation of U.S. rules, directed against the Arab boycott of Israel, the Commerce Department announced. The announcement made no mention of the Atlanta court case in which BNL's Atlanta branch was accused of arranging \$5.5 billion in illegal loans to Iraq before the Gulf war. Its former manager, Christopher Drogoul, was sentenced last Dec. to 37 months in prison on a guilty plea to three lesser charges after the government dropped parts of the indictment that could have involved BNL's Rome headquarters. The Commerce Department said BNL-Atlanta provided 93 items of information to Iraqi banks regarding foreign companies business relationships with Israel and companies known or believed to be blacklisted by Arab League countries. The companies were not named in the announcement. Commerce said the Atlanta bank also broke rules by failing to report 11 requests for boycott-related information.

Qatar offers gas to Israel 'on conditions'

DOHA (AFP) — Qatar is prepared to sell liquefied natural gas to Israel on condition that there is further progress in the Middle East peace process, Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Bin Jabr Al Thani said Thursday. He told Israeli and other journalists covering disarmament talks here that he had already raised the possibility with Israeli counterpart Shimon Peres at meetings in October in New York and in January in London. "No agreement has been reached on the subject. But if the peace process makes progress we see no hindrance," he said. Sheikh Hamad also said that given the same conditions he saw no bar to his visiting Israel, with which his country has no relations. But he said he had no further plans to meet Mr. Peres.

India protests Iranian remarks on Kashmir

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India has protested remarks by the Iranian envoy here that New Delhi-based diplomats were denied free movement when they visited Kashmir last week, a foreign office spokesman said on Friday. Iranian Ambassador Reza Sheikh Attar was summoned to the Indian External Affairs Ministry Thursday to receive the protest, the spokesman said, dismissing the envoy's comments as "not consistent with the facts." The Iranian news agency IRNA quoted Mr. Attar as saying that the 11 diplomats who went to Kashmir for four days from April 27 were not allowed to meet Muslim leaders and people, or travel to places like Sopore and Bijnbehara. Mr. Attar's remarks were "not consistent with the facts and contrary to the sentiments expressed by other ambassadors," who also went to the troubled state. They included envoys of three South American and eight Islamic countries. "On the contrary, they (the others) appreciated India's openness on Kashmir," the spokesman said, adding that the Iranian ambassador "was alone in making the complaints." At least 25 ambassadors from New Delhi have visited Kashmir in the past two months to study the situation in Kashmir.

Lebanon sentences 3 in 1976 murder

BEIRUT (R) — A Lebanese court has given life sentences in their absence to three men for the murder of the U.S. ambassador in Beirut in 1976. Al Nahar newspaper said on Friday. The three, all Lebanese who had links to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), were arrested for the murder during the country's 1975-90 civil war but were freed amid the lawlessness, it said. Ambassador Francis E. Meloy, Economic Counselor Robert O. Waring and their Lebanese driver were seized at a roadblock on the Muslim side of the so-called green line, the confrontation line separating Muslim and Christian forces. A few hours later their bodies were found dumped on the Beirut sea front, each had been shot several times. The murder was excluded from a 1991 amnesty for war crimes by the Lebanese government. The three killers at large were named by Al Nahar as Mohammad Al Farkh, Toufik Faroukh and Nameq Kamal. Lebanon has launched a crackdown against crime, making capital punishment mandatory for premeditated murder and introducing the death sentence for politically-motivated crimes.

Iran, South Africa to resume ties next week

NICOSIA (R) — Iran and South Africa have agreed to resume diplomatic relations from May 10, Tehran Radio said on Friday. Iran, which was South Africa's chief oil supplier before it cut diplomatic ties with Pretoria's white government in 1979, decided in January to reestablish relations after South Africa held its all-race elections. Tehran Radio said the date for resumption of ties was decided after talks between the South African Foreign Ministry and the Iranian interests section operating under the Swiss embassy in Pretoria.

PLO self-rule list excludes those who boycotted signing

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

(AP) — The list of candidates for the Palestinian authority circulated by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in the occupied territories Friday reflected a balance between local and foreign-based Palestinian leaders.

PLO chief Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin signed an agreement in Cairo on Wednesday which will introduce Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho within weeks.

The Palestinian authority will be responsible for all legislative, executive and judicial authorities in the autonomy.

The list obtained by the Associated Press Friday from sources close to the PLO named 13 Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and 11 living abroad.

The list is not final, but the balance it reflected seemed a compromise of earlier lists criticised as top-heavy with foreign-based Palestinians.

But PLO sources said the current list reflected Mr. Arafat's anger at being snubbed by local Palestinian leaders, who refused to attend the agreement's signing.

The list fails to name those who have played senior negotiating roles until now and the PLO sources said local Palestinian leaders were unhappy with it.

Notable absentees include Hanan Ashrawi, the high-profile Palestinian spokeswoman, and Jericho leader Saeb Erekat, who led the Palestinian delegation to bilateral talks with Israel until the first PLO-Israel accord was signed in September.

Also missing were Haidar Abdul Shafi, a Gaza leader and Dr. Erekat's predecessor, and Elias Freij, the popular mayor of Bethlehem in the West Bank.

Palestinians in the occupied territories boycotted the agreement's signing in protest of the ceremony occurring while Jerusalem was effectively closed off to most residents of the occupied territories by Israeli closure orders.

"We must be sure that whatever agreement we reach contains the potential for success, whether it is signed in two days or two weeks," said Faisal Hussein, the PLO's West

Bank leader who led the boycott.

Mr. Hussein, however, appears on the list as the official responsible for Jerusalem affairs.

Ibrahim Shaaban, a Jerusalem lawyer proposed for the housing portfolio, said he had heard about his nomination in the Palestinian media but had no official notice.

But Mr. Shaaban, who heads the Palestinian housing council, said he thought the list was a good one.

"You just can't appoint 200 members to this council to satisfy everyone," Mr. Shaaban said.

The following list identifies each candidate for the Palestinian authority, the current residence and proposed portfolio, if known. Some candidates will share portfolios.

1. Yasser Arafat — Tunis, head of the authority.
2. Ahmad Qomria — Tunis, economics; headed the Palestinian delegation to economic talks with Israel.
3. Nabil Shaath — Tunis, diplomatic relations.
4. Yasser Amr — Amman; education.
5. Intisar Al Wazir — Amman; social affairs.
6. Samir Goshah — Tunis, no proposed portfolio.
7. Yasser Abed Rabbo — Tunis; information.
8. Nasser Youssef — Tunis; police.
9. Abdulhikm Ibrani — Tunis; no proposed portfolio.
10. Muhammad Zahid Nashaidi — Amman; will head PLO affairs in Jordan.
11. Faisal Hussein — Jerusalem; Jerusalem affairs.
12. Zakaria Al Agha — Gaza; no proposed portfolio.
13. Jamil Tarifi — Ramallah; civil affairs.
14. Abdul Aziz Hajj — the West Bank; health.
15. Samir Abdullah — Ramallah; infrastructure and development.
16. Muhammad Eshayla — Nablis; infrastructure and development.
17. Hisham Abdul Razek — Gaza; no proposed portfolio.
18. Maher Masri — Nablis; no proposed portfolio.
19. Ibrahim Shaaban — Jerusalem; housing.
20. Jawid Ghassain — Amman; finance.
21. Anton Sansour — Bethlehem; education.
22. Frelh Abu Medeleh — Gaza; legal affairs.
23. Ahmad Bayand Tamimi — Hebron; no proposed portfolio.
24. Ikrima Sabri — Jerusalem; religious affairs.

Jordan, Egypt chalk out close cooperation

(Continued from page 1)

civil war. He called on the Yemeni parties concerned to report to dialogue to solve their problems.

On the inspection of ships bound to Aqaba, Dr. Sedki welcomed the latest developments to solve this problem, and voiced his country's support for Jordan in this respect.

Egyptian Palestinian relations, Dr. Sedki said, are good and have never been severed.

On the establishment of a Middle Eastern market, Dr. Sedki said it is a mere idea which has not so far crystallised. However, he stressed the need to contemplate future plans to cope with any possible developments.

He said there was no contradiction between the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) and a Middle Eastern market since the first is international while the second is regional.

Dr. Majali said the committee discussed this issue, and stressed the need for close coordination and joint studies with the Lebanese, Syrians, Palestinians as well as the Egyptians to cope with any future developments.

Jordanian Palestinian relations, Dr. Majali said, are very special, unique and historical. He added that the level of coordination was not satisfactory given the unique relations between the Jordanians and Palestinians.

He noted that King Hussein on Thursday informed Palestinian President Yasser Arafat during a meeting held at the Royal Court that it was time for the various joint Jordanian-Palestinian committees to meet following the signature in Cairo of the Palestinian self-rule agreement.

The Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee on Friday concluded its meetings here and signed the minutes of the meetings at the prime ministry.

In the minutes, signed by the two prime ministers, both sides stressed the important role both Jordan and Egypt can play in restoring Arab solidarity and crystallising a unified Arab stand towards the various issues.

They also stressed the need to maintain close coordination and consultation on various

regional and international issues and welcomed the signing in Cairo on Wednesday of the Palestinian self-rule agreement as a step towards a just, comprehensive and lasting solution.

In the field of economic cooperation, the two sides agreed to form a task force entrusted with drawing up a joint mechanism for discussing regional and international issues of economic concern.

Both parties reviewed the status of the Egyptian-Jordanian Company for Investment and Development and agreed to offer the company all the facilities needed for its smooth operations.

The two sides agreed to take the necessary actions to implement the commercial protocol concluded in September 1992. They also called on a joint trade committee to meet within two months to agree on items exempted completely or partly from each other's customs duties and to set up a coordination committee grouping representatives of the private sector in both countries.

The two sides underlined the need to maintain coordination and cooperation in the field of financial legislation. They called for reintroducing the "trip ticket" regulation for private cars crossing from either countries.

The two sides agreed to exchange expertise and to hold consultations on planning, to unify the terms used in planning and to carry out joint studies in the area of economic planning.

The two sides agreed to embark on the necessary steps to support industrial integration, particularly in the field of electronic and engineering industries, and to unify the specifications and metrology followed in both countries.

In the area of electricity, energy, oil, gas and mining, the two sides expressed satisfaction with the progress of work in the electric grid linking five Arab countries including Jordan and Egypt. They also agreed to exchange expertise and information on energy.

The two sides agreed to exchange expertise and findings of research on agricultural projects, control of epidemics and agricultural pests. They also agreed to exchange agricultural

legislation and regulations. The two sides expressed satisfaction with the performance of the Arab Maritime Bridge Company, which was established at the joint initiative of King Hussein and President Hosni Mubarak.

The two sides agreed to exchange information on health research and drugs and to enact health legislation to ensure food and drug security. They also agreed to exchange studies on joint chemical and drug industries and medical appliances.

The two sides agreed that the Ministry of Education in Jordan will allocate 100 seats for Egyptian students to study at Jordanian universities and obtain the first university degree. The Egyptian Ministry of Education will allocate 110 seats for Jordanian students to pursue their higher studies in addition to 15 scholarships for post-graduates and 300 seats for undergraduates.

The two sides agreed to work out a joint tourist strategy to develop areas of tourist attraction and to restore a direct contact line between the news agencies in both countries.

The two sides agreed to activate the labour agreement and to reinvestigate a joint labour committee.

The two sides agreed to hold the 12th session of the committee in Cairo during the second half of November 1994.

On Thursday King Hussein received Dr. Sedki and the accompanying delegation and discussed with them the latest developments of the Middle East process and the need for inter-Arab coordination to ensure the realisation of a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region.

He also stressed the importance of economic cooperation and coordination, given the economic developments and changes in the region.

The audience was attended by Prime Minister Majali, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King's political advisor Marwan Al Qasem and members of the Jordanian side to the higher committee's meetings.

Dr. Sedki and the accompanying delegation left for Cairo on Friday. They were seen off by Dr. Majali and several cabinet ministers.

Princess Basma to head Um Al Hussein Orphanage

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma on Thursday accepted to serve as president of Um Al Hussein Orphanage in succession to her late mother, Queen Zein Al Sharaf, the Queen Mother.

Princess Basma's acceptance of this post, which has been held ever since the orphanage was established by the late Queen, is in response to His Majesty King Hussein's directives and upon the request of the orphanage's administrative committee.

In accepting this post, Princess Basma said she would be proud and honoured to serve as president of the orphanage and pledged to follow the path chartered by her late Mother.

"I will do my best to fill the great gap caused by the passing of the mother of all Jordanians," Princess Basma said.

The Princess, accompanied by Her Royal Highnesses Princesses Zein Bint Al Hussein, and Rahma Bint Al Hassan, visited the orphanage on



Thursday and inspected the services offered to the orphan children.

The orphanage's children observed a minute of silence in mourning of the late Queen Mother.

Princess Basma also met with the orphanage's administrative committee and discussed with them the orphanage's situation, its achievements and future plans to benefit more children.

Abul Ragheb elected head of alliance in Parliament

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amman Deputy Ali Abul Ragheb has been elected president of the Democratic Parliamentary Alliance (DPA) in the Lower House of Parliament. Deputy Anwar Al Hadid, also from Amman, was elected vice-president; Ibrahim Shenhadeh, from the Baq'a refugee camp, was elected secretary general and Saleh Rshaidat was elected spokesman.

According to Mr. Rshaidat, who is also a former minister of youth, the new alliance, which groups 12 deputies, aims at exchanging views among the members and coordination of positions as well as collectively shouldering responsibilities. It also aims at ensuring coordination with the other blocs of the Parliament, exchanging views with them, cementing

alliances, and doing whatever necessary to ensure the highest level of coordination.

The new alliance also embraces the need to prepare research studies, hold seminars, and carry out the necessary activities which provide the optimum conditions for deputies' performance in parliament. It also calls for follow-up of developments and choosing the best methods of collective response.

The DPA refrains from adopting or committing itself to any political orientation though this does not necessarily contradict with the members' affiliation or political commitments.

The DPA's membership is open to all deputies provided they follow the regulations of the alliance.

Jordan urges Japan

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Moritomo did not go into details, but Jordanian officials have said that they would like to see Tokyo exert its influence to break deadlocks in Middle East peacemaking from behind the scenes.

The Japanese spokesman said Tokyo, which is staying away from the bilateral phase of the peace process under the sponsorship of the U.S. and Russia, was committed to contributing to improving the conditions for peace in the region through the multilateral phase.

He noted that Japan chairs the multilateral working group on the environment and co-chairs the groups on regional economic cooperation and water resources.

Mr. Moritomo said that Mr. Kakizawa found Jordan committed to peacemaking in the region. But the spokesman declined to be specific when asked whether Jordanian leaders had reported any practical moves towards replacing the sea-based inspection of Aqaba-bound ships by American warships with a land-based regime.

"Our talks here reinforced our impression that the peace process has entered a new era," he said, adding that Mr. Kakizawa would urge Damascus to "cooperate with us closely" in achieving peace in the region.

Palestinians sceptical

(Continued from page 1)

Arafat, said the PLO was ready to take immediate control and three weeks were just the time it took for orderly transfer.

More than 100 Norwegians, Danes and Italians arrived Thursday as part of an observer force for Hebron, one of the most tense areas in the occupied lands.

Israel's agreement to such a force two months ago enabled the resumption of talks suspended after the February massacre of Palestinians in a Hebron mosque and paved the way for Wednesday's signing in Cairo of the autonomy accord.

"We will patrol Hebron by car, observe and report what's going on," said Colonel Kjell Johansen, the force's Norwegian commander. He said up to 20 observers would be in the streets at all times during the three-month term.

The Temporary International Presence in Hebron will number 125, about half Norwegians, said deputy commander Thorer Nielsen. It will deploy in Hebron Sunday.

Here is an unofficial sche-

dule of the implementation of Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, following the signing of the Cairo accord:

May 4: Start of the release of 5,000 Palestinian prisoners.

May 5: First coordination meeting between the Israeli army and Palestinian police officers, at Erez, in the Gaza Strip.

From May 8 to May 14: 1,000 Palestinian policemen to arrive in Gaza, and 750 in Jericho, first batch of the 9,000 Palestinian police due to take over security in the self-rule areas.

May 25: Israel completes its withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho as well as the handover of civilian and military authority to the Palestinians.

May 25: 24-member Palestinian Authority to be set up, headed by Chairman Arafat.

June 8: Release of 5,000 Palestinians to end.

Early August: Road skirting Jericho to be completed.

August 4: Talks to resume on the size of the Jericho region.

COLUMN

Caning not to affect U.S.-Singapore ties

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Singapore said Friday that its ties with the United States were strong enough to weather difficulties caused by the caning here of American teenager Michael Fay for vandalism. A foreign ministry spokesman said that it would be "regrettable" if the Fay episode was allowed to affect bilateral relations. The spokesman was reacting to remarks by State Department spokeswoman Christine Shell in Washington Thursday that the caning of 18-year-old Fay would be taken into account in overall bilateral relations. The United States has vigorously protested the caning with President Bill Clinton calling it a "mistake." Singapore Ambassador to the United States S.R. Nathan was also summoned to the State Department and told that Washington was disappointed by the affair. "The U.S. and Singapore have always enjoyed a strong relationship based on many common interests and shared strategic objectives," the Singapore foreign ministry spokesman said.

Mandela to earn \$220,000 annually

PRETORIA (AFP) — South Africa's incoming President Nelson Mandela will receive an annual salary of 784,350 rand (\$217,777) and unlike outgoing President Frederik de Klerk, the package will be taxed, according to a report on salaries for the post-apartheid parliament released Thursday. The salary was approved by Mr. Mandela, who will be sworn in as the country's first black president next Tuesday after his African National Congress (ANC) claimed victory Monday in the country's historic election. Supreme Court Judge D.A. Melamet said in his report, Mr. Mandela's two Executive Deputy Presidents, who are due to be elected at the first sitting of the post-apartheid parliament in Cape Town Monday, will receive pre-tax salaries of about 600,000 rands (\$166,000) and a state house valued at 81,600 rand (\$22,500). The report also recommended that all parliamentarians' allowances, other than car allowances, be abolished and incorporated into taxable basic salaries. Free housing for parliamentarians would be a luxury of the apartheid past, the report said, with only Mr. Mandela and his two deputies qualifying for the perk. Parliamentarians will also have to cough up for their expenses, and will be limited to two free journeys a month between parliament and home.

Chinese army to scrap 'ghost' post

BEIJING (AFP) — China's powerful Central Military Commission has proposed the scrapping of the army's highest rank, apparently because nobody has ever filled it, the China Daily said Friday. The rank of "first-grade general" was created in 1988 when ranks were reintroduced to the People's Liberation Army (PLA), but the position has remained vacant ever since. The remaining 10 ranks — from general down to second lieutenant — will be retained, the newspaper quoted General Yu Yonghu as saying. Further proposed amendments to service regulations include regular salary raises for officers, which Yu said was essential to boosting morale. In an attempt to speed up the promotion process, the maximum retirement age for deputy army commanders will be reduced from 60 to 58, Yu said.

Letter hints at Monroe, Kennedy relationship

CORONA, California (R) — A California auction house is selling a letter from Robert Kennedy's sister which it says suggests a once-close relationship between the politician and sex symbol Marilyn Monroe. Odyssey Auctions, based in Corona near Los Angeles, said the letter is one of many items that had not been made public for more than 30 years and are to be auctioned next week. The handwritten letter to the actress from Jean Kennedy Smith reads: "Dear Marilyn... Understand that you and Bobby are the hot item we all think he should bring you with him when he comes back east..."